

Punch

9^d



The Bourne Review 1898

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Yardley Lavender





PUNCH

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OAK RIDGE medical men have produced an anti-radiation pill claimed to double the immunity of anyone who swallows one fifteen minutes before a nuclear

CHARIVARIA

attack. If America's Distant Early Warning system is on its toes, this should just give time to make sure that you've snatched up the right pill-box—labelled Amino-ethylisothiuronium Bromide Hydro-Bromide.

THE view of Captain Bishop, master of *Sceptre*, that she has a "fifty-fifty" chance of winning the America's Cup, has set yachting men eagerly awaiting the first dead heat in the series.

EAST-WEST charges and counter-charges about who torpedoed the Summit Conference are reaching the pitch where the two sides will simply have to get round a table and settle it.

It's suggested that everyone should carry a personal bag to contain rubbish. Up to now only women have been doing this.

RECENT disciplining of Russian athletic stars—Nina Ponomareva dropped, Tishkevich reprimanded, Zibina relieved of her shot-putting



medal—might have made them wish they'd sought asylum over here in 1956, if they hadn't just heard what's happening to Wardle.

WHAT with the clergy coming out against brides with "no right to wed in white," and the confetti-throwers empty-handed under the litter law, all that's needed to take the last bit of romance out of matrimony is for someone to remove that tax concession.

IT is understood that one or two enlightened cereal manufacturers will in



future pack the free gifts in the packet, with a coupon to be sent in by customers who want the cereal.

"Are you brilliant—or just a steady sort of chap? Frankly we prefer the latter..."
Daily Telegraph

Pity.

AMONG more than a hundred survivors of the old administration in Iraq now to stand trial for conspiracy and corruption are a number of Army intelligence officers "from captains upwards". It is feared, in Army intelligence service circles, that this news may induce a certain apathy about promotion.

REPORTS of a new variety of wheat which will stand up to all weathers and grow to a height of five feet have naturally interested the farmers. They're all ears, too.

Sorry, No Recognizee
ALL the Chinese look alike
To every Westerner but Ike.



Punch Diary

IS this, then, to be the pattern of events that shapes our ends? First a dwindling Empire, then a shrinking Commonwealth, and finally a piecemeal dribbling away as prizes in the quiz shows of the world? Here's Huddersfield for you, señor, and Rutland for the lady with the earrings. Yes, Comrade, you have correctly named the author of *Hard Times*, and may take your pick from Bognor, Glasgow, or the Isle of Wight. Stroma—sorry, not sure if it's in the market—and you can't have Wales or Devonshire either: they were won in a spelling-bee last Tuesday afternoon. Ah, there goes gallant little Westminster to the guy in the tengallon hat! And now, ladies and gents, who'll recite correctly the first three lines of *Henry VI*, Part One for the jackpot, which contains a hand-carved fridge, Epsom Downs, the Manchester Ship Canal, and a framed portrait of John Bull with a ring through the end of his nose?

Tribute

REVERENCE and self-denial are always beautiful things. I have been moved by reading that the *Nautilus* juke-box, which was on incessantly during the Polar transit, was temporarily stopped when the North Pole was reached. Has modern civilization any greater honour in its keeping than silence? The Commander did not have some mushily uplifting disc put on, some heavenly choir greeting the Pole in patronizing harmony. He started what I hope will become a tradition. Turning off radio, television, juke-box and hi-fi every time one goes over, under or simply across the Pole would

be a dignified counter to the often crude pranks that occur when the Equator is crossed. Could any geographical feature receive a prettier compliment?

With the Lunatics

ONE report of the British plan to launch a moon-rocket says that it would be done in collaboration with other NATO countries, and that Mr. Macmillan is believed to favour this idea "as a further example of European co-operation." I feel some anxiety about these disclosures. The one hopeful aspect of starting a sub-branch of civilization on the moon is that it should be a non-partisan affair, involving human beings with enough experience of life on this planet to avoid starting anything like it on its satellite. If the first party to arrive has to be a NATO party or a Baghdad Pact party or an Iron Curtain, pan-American or Colombo Plan party, then the whole lot of them might as well stay down here and keep the strife localized. Besides, the idea of two worlds trying to arrange independent Summits, even a quarter of a million miles apart, is just too much.

For This Relief

BY all the rules of human behaviour, one of the happiest ladies in England to-day should be Mrs. Mary Adams. After the best part of thirty years with the B.B.C., where the slightest mention of branded goods is

regarded as a specially dangerous type of blasphemy, she now finds herself Chairman of the Association for Consumer Research. Here she not only has to mention branded goods all day, but actually has, as part of her job, to say exactly what she thinks about them. Such examples of virtue being rewarded on earth are only seldom encountered, but are particularly gratifying when they are.

Pulpit Power

AT a time when the decline in church-going is generally remarked it is surprising that the reopening of the City Temple in Holborn, seventeen years after destruction by bomb, should create such a minor brouhaha, with big pictures in *The Times* and police permission for one thousand cars to park in adjoining streets. Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, the City Temple minister, if anyone, has inherited the mantle of the greatest Nonconformist spell-binder of them all, Spurgeon. To put the thing on its lowest level, Spurgeon's offertory-box office appeal was sensational; his Tabernacle near the Elephant and Castle, now a gaunt ruin, always played to capacity. He had a small by-product of fame which no other preacher is ever likely to achieve; his long sermons were printed in shorthand to assist the instruction of the young teach-yourself stenographer of the day.

Khrushchev Overshadowed

MR. KHRUSHCHEV did his best to bolster the waning Middle East crisis with a broadcast saying the threat of war was still acute, but even *The Times* only gave him a line or two on page seven. Luckily the gap in alarmism had already been resourcefully filled by reports from half-forgotten Formosa of a Communist-Nationalist sea battle off the Matsu Islands, and an assurance by the Mayor of Peking that Communist China could put "a hundred million men into the field in a third world war."

They Have Their Exits...

ON the site of the Stoll theatre, now almost demolished, there is a hoarding showing the block of offices which will be built in its place, and alongside it a list of the "amenities" it will include. The first of these is "Two imposing entrances."





"Take no notice—the fellow's not even a member."

Aspects of modern thought and behaviour

WESTERN APPROACHES : Romance



HEART TO HEART

By MONICA FURLONG

ROMANCE is a formidable old girl for an impressionable young thing to meet and I have still not entirely recovered my composure. Nor am I altogether sure that I got the best of our conversation. However, it seems a pity to waste an exclusive interview with so notable a dowager (never a frequent visitor to Bouverie Street), so I am reproducing our exchanges, suitably pruned of the passages where she went off into hysterical raving about Vienna in the old days, and skating at St. Petersburg, and mediæval troubadours, and the Café Royal in the 'nineties, and lovers walking arm in arm in the Bois, and so on and so forth. I am not allowed to mention our rendezvous (she begged me not to disclose her whereabouts to Mr. William Hickey), but I can reveal that despite the weight of years and the weathering of face-packs and blue rinses she is surviving. Just.

"Well dear," she began, hospitably patting the sofa cushion beside her and holding her lorgnettes at the ready, "not exactly an osier wand, are we? And fragility—I have always maintained—is half the battle. Still, if the worst comes to the worst, you can always settle for being the Cleopatra sort. Given a suitably voluptuous temperament, naturally." She considered me, absently fondling her pekinese.

"That cough you have," she said at last. "Consumptive, I presume?"

"Smoker's, I'm afraid. Or so they said at the last Mass X-ray."

"Pity. Great pity. Nothing ruins a gel's chances in my opinion like really good health. Transparent fingers and a nice couch and you're set up in business. Still we can't all be lucky. That Camellia girl now, I always say she was my best pupil. Never had to tell her anything twice. She and Z. Dobson, as it happens, are the only recent names on

the Old Girls' Roll of Honour." She continued to observe me minutely and soon pounced again.

"Do I notice a slight trembling of the hand? A scarcely perceptible uncertainty of the fingers? Due to champagne, I trust, buckets and buckets of the admirable Widow. That and dancing into the small hours of the morning."

"Well, actually, it's more gins-and- tonic really. You know how it is—one after another. And as to dancing—one can't stop late, because one's got to get up and go to work next morning, and then the last train out to the suburbs goes at about half-past twelve, and what with strikes and one thing and another . . ."

"I assure you, I do *not* know how it is." She was looking a bit prim round the mouth, and I could tell she was cross. But she went on "And your apartment in—in the suburbs? What is that like? Is it opulent and feminine and luxurious? Has it drapery of red velvet and muslin, and gold-encrusted furniture? Can it boast a great feather bed with white, white sheets?"

"Gracious no!" I said, horrified. "And I don't know that you'd call it an apartment, more of a bungalow really. I've gone all contemporary—you know, Swedish furniture and everything practically on the floor. I just wish you

could see my bedroom wallpaper—a rather snazzy abstract, with sweet little bloodshot eyes looking at one. 'Hang-over,' the makers call it. And I've got a terribly ingenious bed—I do love dual-purpose furniture. During the day it stands up on end, just like a cupboard, and then at night it lets down. Trouble is it takes at least three quarters of an hour to get it reassembled and then made and everything."

"Three quarters of an hour," she echoed faintly, and murmured something *sotto voce* about *autre temps, autres mœurs*.

"But I've got some very tasteful sheets in crimson seersucker," I assured her. "And you should see me in my shortie pyjamas with black-and-white zig-zags all over them. Ever so smart."

"Ah, yes, your wardrobe," she went on, the blue look settling about her lips. "Do they drink wine out of your slipper?" I couldn't help giggling at that. What a funny old trout she was, to be sure. "Tricky," I said, "because I mostly wear the strip sandal type of evening shoe. And besides it feels so sloppy walking home in it afterwards. Caught a shocking cold last time I tried it, and I've had the odd twinge of rheumatism ever since."

She sighed. "That after all is a minor point. But to come down to brass tacks and speak of something serious. Love affairs. Now tell me," she spoke briskly, "how many men have died for love of you?"

You can imagine how frightfully uncomfortable I felt, simply didn't know where to look.

"Actually not any, if you come to count them up. I mean, well, one did sort of threaten to drown himself, but he was a neurotic type anyway and funnily enough died of parrot disease months later. Curious, wasn't it?"



ROY DAVIS



"Mummy, what is a Test Match?"

"And how many men have been your impassioned admirers?" Her voice had taken on a strange note and I could see she was keeping her temper with difficulty. "How many, for example, have permitted you to carve your initials on their wrists?" I flatter myself I know my Colette, but I don't mind admitting I was pretty startled by this.

"It doesn't seem very hygienic when you come to think about it. I mean you never know where the glass has *been*, do you? And suppose you hit the artery? How on earth would you explain to the doctor? And then one wouldn't want to *hurt* the poor darlings, would one? Different if one was a trained nurse and could give them a morphia injection first."

"And presents?" she inquired with some asperity. "What presents have you received from your admirers?"

"That's different," I said, feeling myself on stronger ground. "There was

a copy of *The Waste Land* from the boy next door, and *Male and Female* from a student at the London School of Economics, and there were the tickets for *My Fair Lady* from someone I worked with, and there was a cutting of 'Peace' I had been coveting for the back garden from the man we meet in the pub, and there was a subscription to a pacifist journal from the curate at St. Cuthbert's, and . . ."

"You stupid girl," she said, almost shouting. "I don't care about books, and tickets and—and roots. What about jewels? Jewels and furs and baskets and baskets of roses."

"Oh! I see. Well, I've never been much of a one for jewels. The Economics boy gave me an ivory necklace—it was a passing whim of mine—but the string broke one day when I was crossing Oxford Street—just outside Marshall and Snelgrove it was, such a nuisance—and that was that. And then there was

the garnet ring the parrot disease man gave me—but I left that on a wash-basin in the cloakroom at Charing Cross Station. And while we're on the subject, I can't recommend that cloakroom too highly. It's the only one in London where you can look in a mirror free—and a full-length mirror at that."

"Humph!" she replied, not a whit pacified by my cunning diversion. And she leaned forward very far, her toque slightly awry, poking me with her gold-topped cane, and said, almost in a whisper, "And do they duel over you, girl?" Naturally I was jolly embarrassed at such a question.

"Goodness no," I said. "An odd tiff or two when I worked for the Peace Pledge Union—they were a quarrelsome lot—and once a bit of a row when I was fourteen and belonged to the Young People's Christian Fellowship—you know how fierce these Christians are—but nothing you could really call



serious. After all, I'm nothing special. I mean to say, I——"

"Pah!" she said, rigid with contempt, "you modern girls. Lily-livered, that's what you are. Have you ever been serenaded then, tell me that?"

It seemed a shame to upset the old thing again, but I couldn't tell her a lie, so I put things as tactfully as I could.

"My father made things a bit difficult there. He was a strange man in many ways, and when the Suburban Skiffers came round one night and started a bit of a shindy—Parrot Disease was on the washboard, I remember—he sent them away. You will hardly believe this, but he was terrified the neighbours would talk." The rheumy old eyes of Romance shone for the first time and I could see that in her younger days she must have had her points.

"You mean, my dear," she said, her voice trembling with excitement "you mean, you had a stern father. But that's perfectly splendid. Did he beat you, lock you in your room, forbid you to see any but the young man he had chosen as your suitor, and make you wear a veil when you went out?"

"Good Lord, no. You've got dad all wrong. He's the mildest of men, and he could hardly wait to get his daughters married off, so he could have their

bedrooms to keep his kits in. He makes model aeroplanes, you know."

Suddenly she was shrunk and very, very tired. The beautiful aristocratic bones beneath her wrinkled skin stood out sharply and pathetically.

"Do they write poetry to you?" she said faintly at last.

"Ah, now there you have a point. Parrot Disease once wrote me a sonnet. At least it was intended to be a sonnet—it had fourteen lines, but as I felt obliged to point out to him, the rhyming scheme was all wrong. It didn't attempt to conform to either the Petrarchan or the Shakespearean system of rhyming."

"Are you attempting to tell me how sonnets are written?"

"Sorry. No offence meant. It was only that it came in the School Cert. syllabus and I've always remembered it."

"The education of girls. That's where the trouble started. Reading and calculating are all that is necessary for a girl—and the former only in moderation."

"Don't you believe in the equality of the sexes then?"

"My dear, misguided child. Do you know how vulgar you are being? What

on earth ever led you to suppose that men were the equal of women?"

I was dumbfounded by that, I don't mind telling you. In fact I doubt if I should have emerged from my sulks if she had not started talking again.

"What type of man do you prefer? The Greek god type? Or the blond Viking? Or the fiery, passionate Latin?"

"I'm keener on the quiet, saving sort myself. Take Len, for instance. We went out together for three years and then we were engaged for two years."

"There was some impediment to the fulfilment of your love?"

"Well yes, we had to have £500 to put down for a house, and I said I wouldn't get married unless I could have a proper all-American labour-saving kitchen, and Len said he wouldn't get married unless he could have a new motor-bike and a television set, and it took us seven years to save that much."

"I see." She was frosty as anything by this time.

"And nowadays? Do you have many lovers?"

"Lovers . . .! Well really, what a question. I mean to say, I'm a respectable married woman, and the very idea! Why, whatever would Len say, I should like to know?"

GEORGE SCOTT writes next week. Other contributors to this series:

MAURICE RICHARDSON	JOHN WAIN
WOLF MANKOWITZ	R. C. ROBERTSON.
DREW MIDDLETON	GLASGOW
D. F. KARAKA	P. M. S. BLACKETT

Shallow End

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

IF Mr. Chapman Pincher cares to announce that the seas around Britain are becoming steadily colder he will not lack a supporter. I am convinced, after a tour of the Devon littoral, that the English Channel has lost something like thirty degrees of temperature (Fahrenheit or Centigrade, call it what you will) during the past decade or so, and I cannot understand why the sea lanes from Torquay and other resorts are not already choked by pack or slob-ice.

On holiday I read with great interest about the polar voyage of the U.S. nuclear submarine *Nautilus*. A wonderful feat of navigation. But there was one point in Commander Anderson's report that made my lip curl involuntarily: "The temperature of the water under the ice cap was 32 degrees Fahrenheit (zero Centigrade)," he said, "and no trouble whatever was encountered." From this it seems fairly obvious that over the years there has been an exchange of waters between the

North Pole and the English Channel. Commander Anderson wouldn't find Torbay so tepid, I can tell him . . .

I can tell him because I tried bathing in it. I stripped off on the sands (taking care, of course, that there were no chinks in the pyramid of deck-chairs constituting my modest refuge), paused only to execute a few setting-up exercises and smoke a couple of pipes, and then charged across the intervening slope of sand-with-flints.

As I crossed the threshold of pain to ankle depth some idiot boy of about six years threw a vulgar beach-ball in my direction. The thing hit the water perhaps four yards from me and the resultant fine spray of icicles made me shut my eyes very tight. Beach balls are the devil's own invention and should not be allowed between high and low water by any resort interested in retaining the custom of men in my age-group.

I was now twenty yards and about two feet of slush and infrigerated seaweed from the children. They yelled for me to join them, but I was far too busy watching the wavelets and timing my frenetic tip-toe attempts to avoid further immersion to make any friendly reply. Years ago the really shallow water in the Channel was lukewarm, like a wartime Algerian wine; now it is a fishmonger's slab under the hose. But I was not going to be licked by a few inches of agony. I stooped, cupped some of the stuff in my hands and tentatively applied it to my shins and thighs. And suddenly the wind became mercilessly frigid. I looked back to the deck-chairs hoping to see a man hawking afternoon papers and lunch-time cricket scores. I saw nothing but a blur of grinning faces. Had I been able I should have blushed.

Ten yards to my right four stoutish

women were standing waist-deep amid the alien ice. They looked reasonably serene and it occurred to me with unreasonable pleasure that the cruel sea sometimes contains pockets of warmer water. These ladies, I reasoned, might have found such a pocket. I moved towards them.

"Come on dad," said one of them, "we won't bite you."

"It's all right once you've got your hair wet," said another.

"If you've got any to get wet," laughed the one in tasteless yellow sateen.

"Have a heart," said four, "the men feels it worse'n we do—they got their bones nearer the surface."

"Count three, ducks," said the yellow bladder, "and take the plunge. Won't kill you."

"It's much warmer in than out," said the one in green-and-blue candy stripes.



"Not fifty-fifty? Very well then, sixty-forty . . . seventy-thirty . . . eighty-twenty . . ."

My jaws and teeth were vibrating like the bonnet of an old bus, so I made no attempt to counter this badinage. Instead, I tried a smile. I put my less lifeless foot forward, encountered some treacherous depression in the ocean bed and immediately took the full impact of the Channel round my hips. And now I knew the meaning of fear. How long was it since lunch? It could be fatal, I remembered, to bathe on a full stomach.

Wasn't it Napoleon or somebody who said as much about his army? And that extra king-size pain behind the left knee. Cramp? I hoped so.

I found myself on dry sand. The children were watching from what seemed the shelter of the French coast. "Too shallow," I shouted, the wind whistling my words away at right angles, "I'm going round to the jetty to get a real dive into the harbour. Don't be

late for tea." And I ran—after the manner of Herb Elliott—until I was lost to their view and the cackling of the four insensitive ladies among the crowd milling round the comic postcards, toffee-apples and candy floss.

I read the lunch-time scores in the delicious warmth of the Hall of Mirrors. There was another long article about Commander Anderson and the *Nautilus*. I read that too.

Say "Ah"

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

"Our ignorance of fundamental biology is undoubtedly the major factor limiting our understanding of radiation effects on man."—Report of the U.N. Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation.

"WHAT do you think of this new toothpaste?" I said to Dr. McCrow. I saw he had a little tube among the samples in his morning post. "They say on the telly it contains a new element A.S."

I believe in the oblique approach to doctors. Any initiative I let *them* take.

"Just a minute," he said, adding another to the little campanile of pill-boxes he was building, reading a pamphlet and screwing it up. "Oh, yes, well it's going to oust chlorophyll: everything's got Anti-Strontium now: embrocation, eye-drops, household disinfectants. Why?"

"Oh, I just wondered whether to change to it."

"No harm," said McCrow. "Where's the pain?"

I told him I hadn't got a pain. I'd got lethargy. Didn't want to get up in

the morning. Slept during Armchair Theatre. Tried to get out of invitations. Collapsed after mowing. Hated playing with the dog.

He didn't say anything, and his face didn't give anything away. He'd opened my shirt and was looking inside.

"Then there's this N.R.," I said, when the silence had lasted too long—"that they're putting in that new ketchup."

"Say 'Ah,'" said McCrow.

"On the telly. Ah."

"Ah."

"Ah."

McCrow went and sat down. "Anti-Strontium, Non-Radioactive . . . what's the difference," he said. "Everything's going to have one or the other, from now on."

I thought my heart was thumping,

but I saw through the crack of the surgery door that two men were staggering past with a crate. There was a van outside labelled "Atomic Drug Houses."

McCrow said, "That'll be another lot. What's your house made of?"

"Brick and tile," I said.

"Mm. You know that granite's highly radioactive?"

"I've read that somewhere. But brick and tile isn't?"

He shrugged. "Could be."

"Look," I said. "Do you have to be so damned non-committal?"

"Well, yes, really. It's our ignorance of fundamental biology. What about sleeping out of doors for a few weeks?"

"I suppose it could be arranged. But—"

"No, on second thoughts better not. Did you say you collapse after mowing?"





"Well, Paxton, what is your excuse this time?"

"Not exactly collapse. I only——"
"Wooden-handled mowing-machine?"

"I can't remember."

"I should find out."

"McCrow, I——"

"But then it could be the lawn." He rifled through a heap of booklets. "I read somewhere that plantain has thorium in it. I mean, if your lawn's anything like mine."

"As a matter of fact," I said, "there isn't a bit of plantain in my lawn. Only buttercup."

He passed a hand across his forehead. "Perhaps it was buttercup. It's hard to keep up. A Harley Street man rang me up yesterday to say he'd detected bone deterioration in a patient who bred

wolfhounds." His eye glinted momentarily as he looked up.

"You hate playing with the dog?"

"Yes. Well, I don't hate it, exactly. Anyway, it's not a wolfhound."

"What is it?"

"It's never been settled," I said.

"That's just it, you see," said McCrow, tilting his chair back. "It's gaps in knowledge all the time. Are those washable buttons on your shirt?"

I said I didn't know.

"I think they are. There's this whole question of plastics. I see you carry an unbreakable comb in your top left waistcoat pocket."

"I do."

"It could have neptunium monofilaments." He got up and went to the

window. "You don't get a pain on the left side?"

"No."

He didn't look at me. "Did you know you had a touch of mystagmus? A jerky movement of the eyeballs?"

"It's only just come on, then," I said. "In any case, what's that got to do with it?"

He said that no possibility should be overlooked. He asked me if I owned a trousers-press, ate dripping, rode a donkey, knew any nuns, slept on flock, played the flute. Had I any cyclohexane or furfural in the house? Was my wife an astronomer?

I said no. "And, McCrow," I said, "I realize you must be very busy——"

He nodded. "There'll be another

crate coming any minute," he said.

"—and so am I. Will you answer me one question? Am I to gather that you definitely suspect a radioactive condition? I think I have a right to know."

He sat down.

"Give up TV, anyway," he said. "Get rid of that luminous watch. You never know. Of course, you could just be run-down. I know I am. I'll write you a prescription."

"Make it a long sea voyage," I said, "preferably not in the Pacific."

He said that I knew perfectly well he couldn't do that, not with the National Health costing what it did. "In fact," said McCrow, scribbling on his little pad, "I probably can't even do this. It'll be a sort of test-case. Anyway, try it. Come back and let me know how you go on."

I thanked him, took the slip of paper and left. All I want now is a shop that dispenses Geiger-counters.

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Blow one and two main ballast. Half ahead together. Stop blowing one. Stop both. Group up. Prepare to surface."

"Engine room reports starb'd propeller gone, sir."

"Thank you. Shut main vents. Blow B. Planes amidships. Up periscope. She's all yours, Number One. I'm turning in."

A page or two of this, with a brusque "Cotter main vents!" to follow, is the least one expects from any submarine story, fact or fiction. So long as the ship keeps diving and surfacing there is never a dull moment. But of course the *Nautilus's* difficulty was that, once under the ice, there was really no point in constantly opening and shutting and blowing. Her job was to keep going where the Inertial Navigation System told her until she came out the other side. It isn't easy, with the best will in the world, to make a dramatic story out of what, apart from the food, must have been rather like sitting in an Inner Circle train for four days on end.

The newspapers did their best. The *News Chronicle* found out what Commander Anderson's children were doing when the story broke. "*Three-year-old Bill was asleep*," it said in italics. "*Thirteen-year-old Michael was out in his small boat fishing off Connecticut*." Reporters, "scratching hard for a human interest story," as the *Guardian* put it, tackled members of the crew at Portland, and got the exclusive statement, "I guess there was nothing to it really." Freddie L. Boswell, Jun., under the heady influence of a party at the *Time-Life* offices, opened up as we have seen and told the *Evening Standard* about the tenderloin. But by and large the excitements we associate with polar journeys were lacking. There has been no hint of any row. Nobody, for instance, has leaked the news that when *Nautilus* was a few leagues short of the Pole she received a message from *Skate* advising her to give it up and try again next year.

It was this sense of something missing that drove me to read the rather fuller account of the voyage of that earlier *Nautilus* which, on March 19, 1868, reached the South Pole after a journey of some forty hours under the ice. Jules Verne, with his astonishing prophetic vision, would not fail, I believed,

Nothing To It, Really

By H. F. ELLIS

THEY had steak, French fried, creamed peas, fresh fruit salad, fresh bread and North Pole cake. "We had tenderloin steaks," said Electronic Technician (2nd class) Freddie L. Boswell, Jun., when asked to describe life under the polar ice-cap. "We could have had T-bone steaks," he added, to round out the picture, "but we prefer tenderloin."

They saw thirty-eight films and played chess, cribbage and the juke-box. They did not stop at the Pole.

It would be ungenerous in the extreme to describe the story of the *Nautilus's* sub-polar voyage as in any way disappointing. The achievement in itself is enough. Its implications, commercial and strategic, are tremendous. The thing was done with quiet courage and flawless efficiency. And yet—and yet one would have liked a little more colour, a touch of drama, some hint of at least a momentary anxiety or emotion.

"Shut A and Z Kingstons."



to give me a faithful picture of the feelings of a submarine crew forging ahead into the unknown beneath a floating continent of ice. There would, if I remembered the book at all, be plenty of drama.

Well, yes and no. A surprising thing about Captain Nemo's *Nautilus* is that throughout its entire twenty-thousand league voyage (let alone the brief fortnight or so spent in the Antarctic) no single member of the crew is ever recorded as having said anything, with the exception of the man who understandably cried out "Help! Help!" (in French) when seized by a poulp with tentacles forty-eight feet long. I don't mean that they never *spoke*; what I mean is that no single intelligible utterance is recorded, either in direct or indirect speech. From the point of view of human interest, the crew of the U.S.N. *Nautilus* are almost hysterically garrulous compared with their predecessors. Captain Nemo himself, of course, says a good deal, and so do Professor Aronnax, his servant Conseil, and master Ned Land, the worthy harpooner. But the crew, from whom I had hoped so much, converse, when they converse at all, in "an unknown tongue."

There is another disappointing circumstance. If ever there was a time for some good crisp verbatim submarine orders and "Aye, aye, sirs," it was when the first *Nautilus* became trapped in the ice owing to the sudden inversion of an iceberg. The opportunity is missed. Indeed, the sad fact is that never, from beginning to end of the voyage, does Captain Nemo rap out a word of command. That he *gave* orders, we know. "I have given orders to open the hatches," he says on a remarkable occasion off the Island of Gilboa. But where is the drama in that? He also occasionally presses knobs.

"The Captain pressed an electric clock three times. The pumps began to drive the water from the tanks; the needle of the manometer marked by a different pressure the ascent of the *Nautilus*, then it stopped.

"We have arrived," said the Captain."

This is better, but it lacks the urgency, the immediacy of spoken command. Why Jules Verne should have denied himself the luxury of executive orders I am at a loss to understand. It is not that he was incapable of putting them



"And when did you first notice this sudden mistrust of your fellow man?"

together off the submarine. Witness the brisk nautical exchange when the Commander of the U.S. frigate *Abraham Lincoln* was on fire to set sail in search of the *Nautilus*.

"He sent for the engineer.

'Is the steam full on?' asked he.

'Yes, sir,' replied the engineer.

'Go ahead,' cried Commander Farragut."

And again, a little later:

"Silence!' said the captain; 'Up with the helm, reverse the engines!'"

Why then, if Commander Farragut can do it, must Captain Nemo never be allowed to bark his way through an emergency? It is not that Jules Verne was in any doubt about the working of the *Nautilus*. Full details are supplied to the reader about her weight and dimensions, her inner and outer hulls (joined by T-shaped irons), her thermometer, barometer, hygrometer, manometer and sextant, her pumps, her rudder and inclined planes. Her motive power is no secret. "I use Bunsen's contrivances, not Ruhmkorff's," declared the Captain. "Bunsen's are fewer in number, but strong and large, which experience proves to be the best. The electricity produced passes forward, where it works, by electro-magnets of great size, on a system of levers and cog-wheels that transmit the movement to the axle of the screw."

Nothing could be clearer than that,

nor more suitable for swift dialogue in emergency.

"Prepare to submerge. Press the electric clock three times. Check the manometer."

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Incline the planes. Blow the sextant. Full ahead on both Bunsen's contrivances."

"Engine-room reports starb'd electro-magnet fouled by poulps, sir."

"Thank you . . ."

Captain Nemo could perfectly well have enlivened his daily routine by giving his orders in some such ship-shape fashion. But he did nothing of the kind. Like Commander Anderson he seems to have had no real bent for the dramatic. But, to be fair, he *did* know what was suitable fare for polar regions. No banal tenderloin for Captain Nemo. He and his crew had cheese and salt butter at the South Pole, made from whale's milk.

"Harry Belafonte, the folk singer, is becoming quite a leader of fashion . . . I asked him why a black, instead of the more conventional white, handkerchief . . . 'I find it suits my personality—morbid,' he said with a far from morbid grin . . . For he certainly has no reason to be morbid. He will receive £10,000 for his eight performances in this country . . . But Belafonte says he is not interested in money . . ."

Daily Express

He's morbid.

THE evening that Boris Good-enough, an expert on the Balkans, set off to supper with his quiet friends, Fred and Alice, his thoughts were darker than the night itself.

This was because he was looking back in some bitterness to a past incident. His lecture, "Putative Fiscal Problems in the Balkans To-day," had drawn so many questions from his American audience that in spite of answering "I don't know" to all of them he had only reached the airport in time to be told that his aeroplane was about to depart and a Lady Gravy had got his place in it. "She has a First Priority," the officials said. "Yours is only a Third." With hate in his heart Boris had watched the great machine take off, wondering "How is it possible that anyone with a name like Lady Gravy should suddenly want to fly to Natchez?"

Boris, the son of an English economist and a Bulgarian school teacher, was able to state facts clearly enough, but he could not draw any conclusions from them. This curious inability he regarded as a virtue. "The 'don't know' types who tend to turn up in Gallup Polls are the salt of the earth," he used to say, "and I am proud to count myself amongst them. In fact the earth might be better if there were more of these 'don't knows' on it." Therefore if Boris had been asked why such a distant setback should have been pre-occupying him again now he could

only have answered that he did not know the reason. Nevertheless, the fact was that when he rang the bell at Fred's front door he was still thinking "After all, I got a First in Economics at Cambridge. Why should I only get a Third in Aeroplanes in Cincinnati?"

At last Alice appeared wearing coloured ribbons in her hair and, worse still, a considerable amount of noise was coming from inside the house.

"It's Saskia," Alice explained. "Saskia is a scream."

Saskia's a Scream

By INEZ HOLDEN

"Yes indeed," Boris answered. "Who is she?"

"Princess Saradin. Don't you know her?"

"No. What makes her scream so much?"

"She's only giving us an imitation of her husband drilling a corps of cavalry."

"Good lord. Why doesn't she divorce him?"

"Oh, I believe she did. Anyhow it was all ages ago." Even the formal introductions could not possibly penetrate Saskia's shrillness, and as they went in to dinner Boris realized that he was in for an evening of imitations,

inaccurate information and militant egoism.

Almost at once Saskia admitted that she had tied the ribbons in Alice's hair. "Doesn't she look *mignonne* like that?" Then Saskia went straight on to boast of the lectures she had given all over the world.

"On what subject?" Boris asked sharply.

"Oh, everything and anything." The Princess waved a hand made unwieldy with oversize rings. "It is always easy for me to find subjects. You see, for a start, I have seven languages, and then of course I am by birth *ancien régime* and by experience contemporary. So what do I do? Lecture to the Old World on the New—and to the New World on the Old. And, my dear children," Saskia went on, "my brains do not get

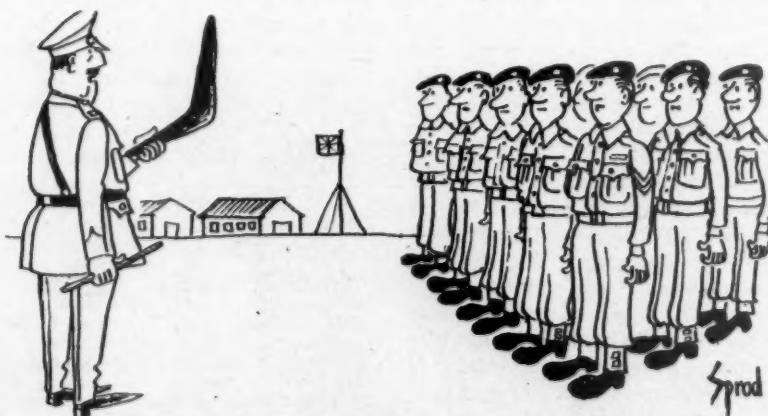
rusty, because I exercise them." She swilled her wine down with full *ancien régime* vulgarity and, waiting just long enough for Fred to re-fill her glass, she said "I have an iron constitution too, you know, and that's why, also, I do not let it rust by drinking water."

All through dinner the Princess pranced along on her tosh horse, encouraged and applauded by Fred and Alice. When they came to the coffee she was talking about her travels. "... and imagine, when I reached that remote place it was already midnight—only one hotel and all the rooms taken—and who should I find there but my husband? Of course he should have left long ago but his car had broken down. What a disaster! Nothing for it but to share a room with my own husband. Mercifully he was completely drunk. You know I should never have married. I am destined to live, always, *à la carte*—oh, absolutely—in fact while I was there I developed a new boy friend."

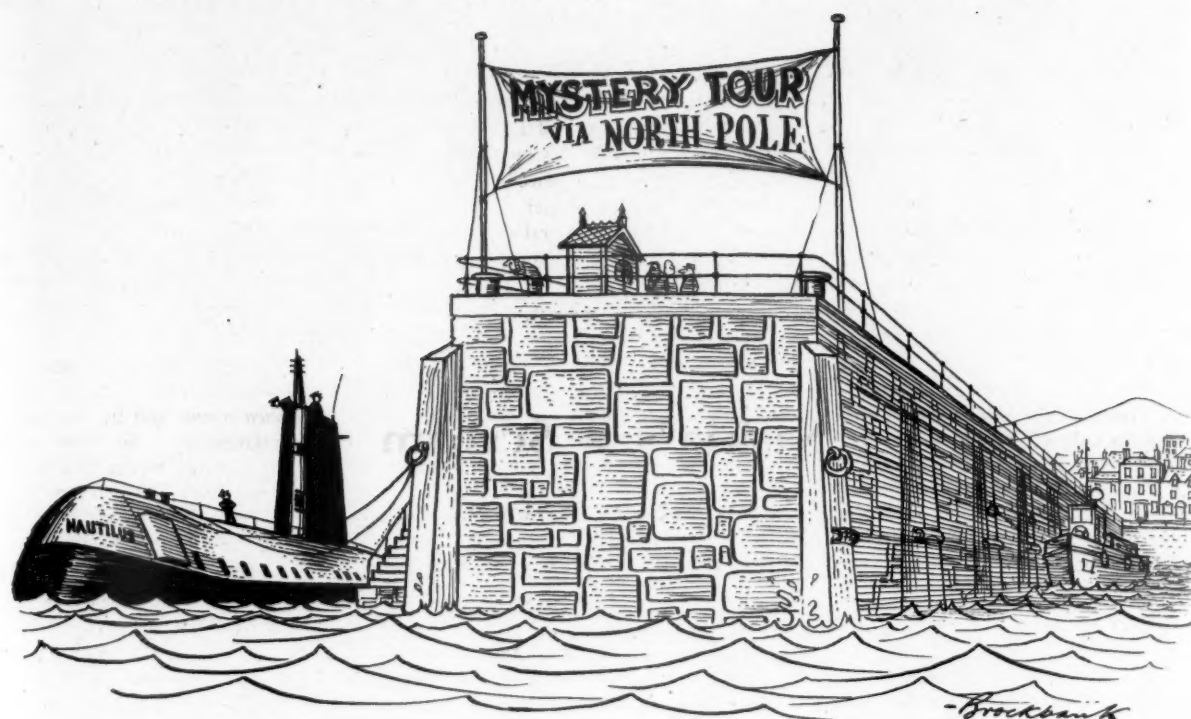
Boris Goodenough's spirits sank down below his Bulgarian boots.

The Princess went on: "The boy friend turned out to be some sort of engineer. What a chance! He was able to mend my husband's car and get it ready for the road—"

Even as the Princess was preparing to depart she was saying "Well, we waved good-bye to my husband, the new boy friend and I..." She took a step back on to the stairs and, tying a scarf round



"Congratulations, men—you're the first unit to be issued with the new Australian guided missile."



her head, she continued her charade. "Cheerioh, old chap, ta-ta, *mon ami*. See you soon." She waved her hand. "Don't know where, don't know when. Maybe somewhere in Mittel-Europa . . ."

As he watched the play-acting Princess, Boris realized that what he had regarded as contempt was also familiarity. He had seen her before—standing with a scarf round her head and waving good-bye.

Just as the Princess reached the front door Boris asked Alice: "Was she married before, do you know?"

"Not so much before as afterwards," Alice said. "Once she was even married to an Englishman, but Fred says that Sir Charles Gravy was a dull dog."

"And a tired one too, no doubt," Boris answered.

At this moment the Princess came back. "Fred has only just told me that you are Doctor Boris Goodenough," she said. "Imagine, once I wangled a place in a 'plane all the way to Natchez just to hear you lecture—" she tried to look tragic "—and in Natchez there was no lecture after all." She shrugged her

shoulders. "And I have always been such an admirer of your lectures."

"It is very kind of you," Boris answered, "but it was because you went to hear that lecture that I couldn't give it."

The Princess looked puzzled. "I don't understand," she said. "Anyhow, I shall make a point of coming to your next lecture. Wherever it is."

Boris bowed. His face froze into a set smile which broadened when he heard the door bang and he knew that, this time, the Princess had gone for good.

Fred came back, apparently delighted with his evening. "Saskia's a scream," he said. "Isn't she a scream?"

But Boris Goodenough, true to his neurosis, was only able to answer, "I don't know."

Where is Fancy Bred?

THE ceaseless strife of Natural Selection
Rages within the poet's teeming brain,
Where the inchoate grows to slow perfection
Through an infinity of grief and pain;
Where in the heat and dust of verbal scrimmage
Lurks the *mot juste*, the fittest for survival;
Where the Idea does battle for the Image,
And metaphor meets metaphor as rival.

Beneath the poet's writing desk are drawers
Stuffed with the fossils of his former hopes—
Iambic pterodactyls, dinosaurs,
Trochaic dodos, protozoic tropes—
Lines lacking in the magical mutation
Which some call chance and others inspiration.

E. V. MILNER

The Artificial Respiration Controversy

By ALAN PLATER

THIS issue, which has been vexed for some time now, really started in Remember of last year when a delegate to the T.U.C. conference remarked in an interview that he thought that Artificial Respiration. Little more was heard, apart from an official denial, and most people thought that a natural death; however, a week later, an official announcement was made, on behalf, that they considered that Artificial Respiration, but in much stronger terms than. The original delegate responsible resigned from, saying that misquotation.

A question was asked in the house, replying to which the Parliamentary Under said that he had given the matter due.

"Bearing in mind," he continued, "and despite, the government is obliged to refrain from on this matter. We prefer to keep an open."

At this stage, representatives of the Arts expressed their opinions regarding. The bone of their was that this was a non-political and from the artists the view, with certain specific, was that Aesthetic. Two critics differed, protesting passionately that Old.

The unions re-entered the battle. This was a social, affecting the welfare of every working, and in view of the ever-increasing cost, drastic action should be. The railway workers said that they thought that greyhounds and occasionally beer. There was an unofficial, inspired by subversive, and many rumours of corruption by undesirable.

Letters to the were numerous and I acknowledge for quoting from:

"DEAR OLD CODGERS,—What is all this about that Artificial Respiration? Me and the Old, we have thought for many years that a day in Blackpool, that is what me and the Old, all these

years. And what is O.K. for me and the Old, that should be O.K. for.

In any case, what right have they to get up on their hind? And who do they think they anyway, that's what me and the Old think."

In contrast to we have.

"DEAR SIR,—This has gone too far. A sense of must surely, in face of these Forces of in our, corrupting the Youth of our green and pleasant, this precious, this.

We are, thanks be to, still able to hold aloft, in the face, and notwithstanding. We will fight them on."

Three or four after the beginning of, there was a plea for, in the leader column of one of our most cherished.

"We must blend the best of Tradition with what Modern Science and Technology have seen fit to. The Nation is on its. Are we to split the? This will surely put it on. Let no one.

Be sure, friends, that the Commonwealth will."

Despite these numerous and various, the rival factions came to, on a number of. The police were obliged to, though a Scotland Yard spokesman denied that force. He emphasized that only good-humoured persuasion in the best English.

It seemed, for a short, that simmering down. Then like a bolt from, came the dramatic, the infamous letter from beyond.

"Artificial Respiration is now an international. The Western powers, by their ruthless suppression of, have seriously undermined the peace and security of all. The people have been denied their fundamental human, the right of individual.

"We have intercontinental guided, and provocation of this, blatantly capitalistic in its, will not be. We do not want a

Third World. Let Wisdom, if such there still, before it is too."

Panic followed on this side of the Iron. There were wholesale, and many were the investors on the Stock Exchange who, it was reliably reported that emigration, despite adverse conditions known to be existing in. Plans were made for emergency, the Home Guard was, and so were hundreds of air-raid shelters.

In the nick, an element of sanity was restored by the Prime, in a speech which might well go down. He agreed that troubled waters, but insisted that the Ship of State could. This would, of course, involve far greater exploitation of the peaceful uses. He had unlimited faith in, and co-existence must at all costs.

Since then, some people have stopped crying that Inevitable; certainly, we all hope that somehow.

LETTERS

(Letters addressed to the Editor, unless specifically marked otherwise, may be considered for publication.)

POSTER ART

To the Editor of Punch

SIR,—I would like to query John Berger's statement, in his article on painting, that no one would dare suggest that the poster is a major art form. One has only to look around to see that in the enormously varied and sometimes beautiful posters of our day a new art form has risen.

Yours faithfully,

ANDREW J. HESTER

Harpenden, Herts.

GEORGE MORROW

To the Editor of Punch

SIR,—When I saw your "Chestnut Grove" series it gave me a mild thrill, for I had intended to suggest that very thing; but with regard to one particular artist, George Morrow. Every week for years I chuckled over his quaint whimsical cartoons in *Punch*.

About sixty years ago both of us were students in Paris at the same time and I saw a good deal of him. About twenty of us formed a small sketch club and whatever the subject set Morrow always made an amusing cartoon of it. On Sundays four of us sometimes rambled along the banks of the Seine and Morrow never failed to see the funny side of any little incident that cropped up.

Yours faithfully,

Sherwood.

F. A. MILMINE







Mr. Arthur Flanagan, who is thought to have been the model for Anna Lea Merritt's "Love Locked Out," posing beside a reproduction of the picture.

As a matter of fact the Cherry Ripe claimants aren't more than the start of the business. It so happened that when the Royal Academy first advertised for the Cherry Ripe sitter, I was issued with a fresh carnation and a pocket spyglass, together with a list of eminent people worth making fools of, and sent to cover the story for Sneakfield's Diary in the *Daily*—, the poor man's *Confidential*, as we proudly call ourselves. You never knew how a thing of that kind might develop.

The claimants began to come in as soon as the doors of Burlington House were open. I must say the affair had been very skilfully publicized. I was a little disappointed not to find Baron Nugent, Mark Sykes or Robin Douglas-Home among them, but while the queue outside the Secretary's office was still quite short, not more than thirty or forty, I was delighted to see through the keyhole where I had taken up my

SEVERAL CLAIMANTS

A faintly sinister side to the charming story of the lady who sat for Millais's "Cherry Ripe" when she was a little girl is provided by the report that there were "several claimants."

position a well-known duchess enter the building. I hurried to intercept her.

"So, duchess," I said in the posh voice we use for talking to duchesses, "you are the girl who sat for Cherry Ripe."

"I'm awfully sorry," she said. "I think you must be mistaking me for someone else. I've come to see the Summer Exhibition."

It made a smashing paragraph, especially as the Duke was holidaying, as we say, in the South of France on his own. Unluckily, though, it was soon after this that Signora de Paula Ossoria was established as the one and only genuine sitter, and the story was dead from our point of view.

However, the idea was still a good one, so I went and had a word with my editor. He was enthusiastic. "That's it, boy," he said, slapping my shoulder, "you go out and find me that stag at bay."

I began on "Love Locked Out." It stood to reason there was a story in that one; a man standing absolutely starko



in front of a suburban cottage door is something you don't often see even now, and in Victorian times it must have been even more unusual.

As soon as I let it be known on the grapevine that I was after the model for "Love Locked Out" the claimants started coming in. I weeded out a few who had obviously not been born when Miss Merritt painted the picture—film-extras they were, mostly—but otherwise it was an uphill job picking out the right chap. Love in the painting has his face hidden, and the one really characteristic feature of his physique is one you can't spend much time examining. I also ruled out all those that said how much they'd enjoyed sitting for Mr. Millais, Mr. Watts, Mr. Holman Hunt and Mr. Rossetti and how kindly they had been treated. In the end I fixed on a chap who seemed to know a bit more than the others, and I decided to pose him in front of a reproduction of the picture and have him photographed.

He was a nice old citizen, in his eighties I suppose, living in retirement in Twickenham, and I'd say he must have put on a stone or two since his modelling days. I asked him if he would give me a hand getting the picture hung on the wall of my office, and suddenly as he was doing it he struck the genuine "Love Locked Out"



The Hon. Mrs. Eupepsia Hoddle, who is thought to have been the model for Picasso's "Danseuse Nègre," posing beside a reproduction of the picture.



Mr. Walter Cheese, who is thought to have been the model for Millais's "The Boyhood of Raleigh," posing beside a reproduction of the picture.

pose, no mistaking it, and the photographer got the photo of the month.

The editor told me not to bother about trying to dig up any dirt. "We're after the 'Top People with this,'" he said. "All they want is the picture." So I gave the old man a fiver and turned him loose, though it went against the grain when I thought of him standing nude on that doorstep all those years ago.

He was hardly out of the office when there was a timid little tap at the door and in came another old boy. "You're too late," I told him, "if you reckon you're the original of 'Love Locked Out.' He's just left."

"'Love Locked Out'?" he said scornfully. "That's not the kind of painter I was accustomed to sitting for, sir. I should have thought you'd have known me, as a matter of fact."

"Known you?"

"The Boyhood of Raleigh," he said proudly. "That's who I am."

I called the photographer back double quick and sent out for a print of the Boyhood. Before I actually posed him I had to give him a quick examination to make sure he knew Millais from Millet, not to mention Manet and Monet; but he came through all right, and by the time we'd finished talking he'd got the pose by himself.

We had four or five more Raleighs during the day, and half a dozen Lights of the World, a couple of Beata Beatrixes who ought to have read up their subject a bit more thoroughly, and a very old Order of Release. One lady claimed she was Whistler's mother. She knew her stuff, too: old days in Lowell, Mass., how disappointing it had been that her boy hadn't done better at West Point, the lot. "Arrangement in Black and Grey," she said, peering wistfully at the Medici Print she had thoughtfully brought along with her to clinch her claim, "that's what he called me."

"Let's see now," I said. "Whistler was born in 1834 if my researchers don't deceive me. I dare say you wouldn't have been much more than a slip of a girl at the time."

"Oh, well," she said, rolling her print up in a huff, "you can prove anything with figures."

Just as I was getting bored with the whole thing in came a grey-haired old lady with a harp who reckoned she had been Hope. I tried to photograph her sitting on the biggest beach-ball I could find, but she seemed to have lost her sense of balance in her old age.

After that, when people began seeing the results in the papers, the whole business started to get out of control. Laughing Cavaliers, Sistine Madonnas, *Déjeuners sur l'Herbe*, Blue Boys and Mona Lisas turned up in defiance of the

laws of nature until I told the hall-porter not to let another artist's model in for the rest of his life. Even so, he was by-passed by a svelte lady who claimed to have been the model for Picasso's "Danseuse Nègre," of 1907. She had brought a print with her so that I could see the resemblance. It was no good my protesting she was no more a nègre than I was: neither was the picture.

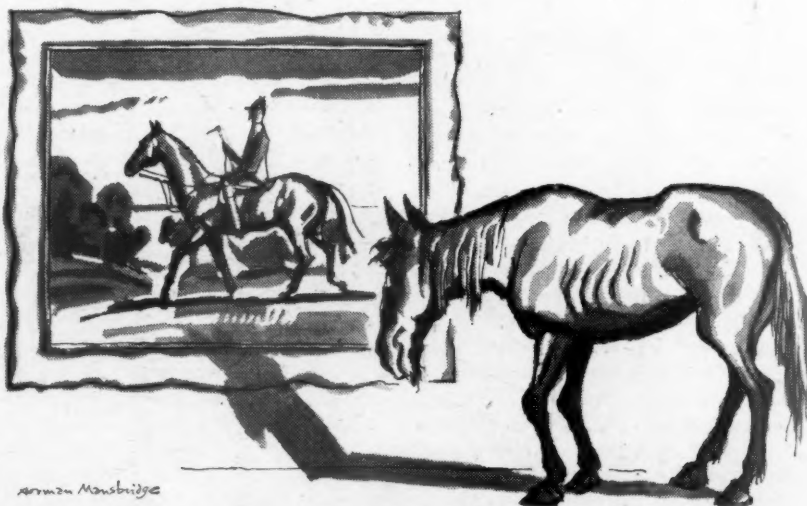
"But it's unmistakably me," she kept saying. "Can't you see it?" So we took a photo to keep her quiet, and I must say it was quite moving, at least for the people that get moved by that sort of thing.

After that I decided very firmly that this particular act was over and decided to go around the Soho clubs in search of a breath of fresh air. I should never have gone the Covent Garden way . . . It cost me the best part of a fiver on my expense sheet to get rid of that old dray-horse that had once sat to Sir Alfred Munnings.

B. A. Young

"By placing the onus firmly on the United Nations and the Arabs themselves, the President may have elucidated the true nature of the dilemma. For if neither the world organization nor the Arabs accept the challenge, who will be able to find fault with America and Britain falling back on their own devices?" —Daily Telegraph

As if we didn't know.



British Railways horse "Charlie," who claims to have been the model for Sir Alfred Munnings's painting of Bahram, posing beside a reproduction of the picture.

Delicate Occasion

By R. G. G. PRICE

OUR tallest chimney-stack was not only moulting but careening.

We expected that when it toppled it would not fall on a member of the family but on somebody likely to sue; life has taught us to plan on such assumptions. Some time earlier the vent of the boiler had been left open until the tiles cracked so badly that an insurance company paid us to renew them. Our builder now suggested that perhaps the same accident had caused the damage higher up and that the company might pay again. This seemed insanely optimistic but we simply could not be ungrateful to him. Here was he wagging with eagerness on our behalf. How could any people of heart rebuff him? On the other hand, one does tend to get into a permanent

cringe towards institutions which one supports. Banks, building societies, insurance companies never seem servants, like shops, any more than the police do. They should be kept at the distance of a Banker's Order. Tempted, they might react like Providence.

The company, which before had acted just on our application, this time did us proud. We had a letter to say that an assessor was coming. It is a terrible thing to be brought up short by the things one has missed along life's way, to find oneself threadbare within one's head as without. Here was I, a Master of Arts of no mean university and a man who read *Encounter*, and I did not really know what assessors were or with what variety of poise they should be treated. It is a profession

that does not publicize itself. It has no public gallery like the Stock Exchange, no gimmick like the doctors' anonymity on Television, nothing corresponding to the photogenic bonhomie of massed bishops. However, the builder got as wildly excited as a country G.P. whose patient has got him to call in a medical peer.

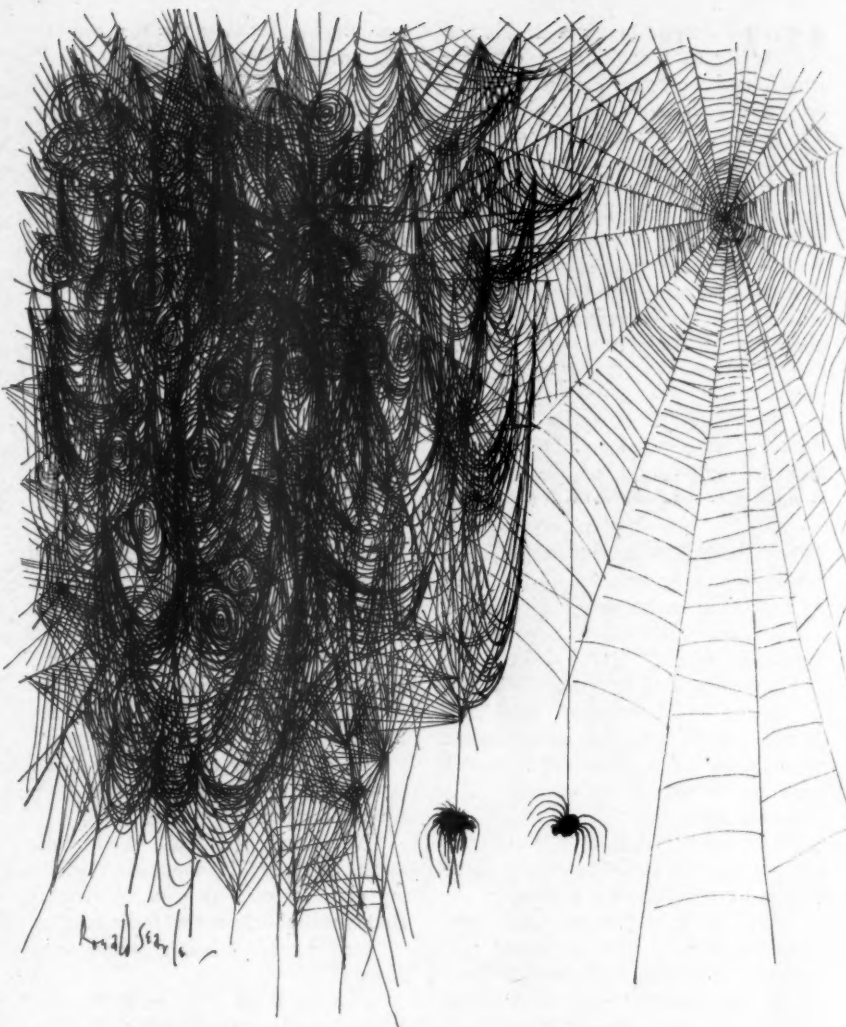
When the afternoon came I was terribly keyed up. I imagined the assessor might resemble anything from Ronald Knox's detective who used to find out who killed his company's clients to Mr. Leopold Harris. I could not settle down. I kept looking up at the chimney in fear of a sudden cure. I could imagine the stumbling sentences telling the man he had come for nothing. Unhappily whenever respectability



becomes all-important to me—as it sometimes does on Tuesdays—other selves obtrude. Somewhere deep inside me both waif and faun lie in wait. Neither seemed appropriate in dealing with somebody hunting for candle-ends or clockwork. I grew so anxious, not about winning money but about getting off, that in my desperate attempts to mime probity I began to look like one of those old solicitors from cathedral towns who used to flavour the works of Mr. J. S. Fletcher. If I had had a wing collar in the house, even one left behind by a visitor, I should have worn it. Trying to settle myself before the smut-hound arrived I picked up a Raymond Chandler. It was a feckless choice. I could imagine what a Bay City assessor would have done about two pieces of damage to one chimney. When the builder ushered the assessor in the gate I was not just mentally unprepared. I was contra-prepared; and if this word has been hitherto unknown it conveys but the more vividly the abjectness of my disintegration.

He turned out to be a cheerful, competent man, obviously not merely of professional but of consultant status. After greetings he produced a pair of bird-watching glasses and looked upwards at the chimney, while we stood about carefully not making conversation, like parents at a bedside while the specialist is listening to their child's chest. He then walked briskly round the corner and chimney-watched from there. We did not quite know whether to follow him. It seemed inhospitable not to, but he might feel we were deliberately disturbing his concentration. We let him have a few minutes alone and then, as if anxious for a glimpse of roses, drifted after him. Putting down his glasses he asked the builder a question or two, enough to encourage him to tell his story, and a dramatic story it turned out to be. He had been up there on a ladder that swayed and quivered with the chimney: a puff of wind at any time might strike the brick-work to matchwood: it was puzzling that the chimney stood at all.

The assessor courteously agreed that the stack was derelict. He then bid a number of reasons why its condition was nothing to do with the old trouble. By this time I was convinced that our claim, though *optima fide*, must seem fraudulent. His technical arguments



"Could you tell me the name of your psychiatrist?"

were so crisply delivered and his non-technical comprehensible ones so *logical*. The builder's verve was flagging but he battled on alone with a look of badly masked scorn at my recessive response. Unlike God, I could imagine him thinking, I help those who don't help themselves. The assessor listened carefully to his arguments and then incisively replaced them by more powerful, more expert arguments, yet without in any way being discouraging. His house surgeon was stimulated, not annihilated.

He said he would come again when the scaffolding was up, though he could hold out no hope of any better verdict. When he went on to say that he would be on holiday by then, but as he would

be in the neighbourhood he would drop in, my feeling of guilt nearly strangled me. There would he be standing high above the garden on planks looking down the flue through his glasses and, for all I knew, dressed in a blazer, and all because of my rapacity. What made it all the worse was that we should be on holiday ourselves—and in Italy, at that. I was by now one hundred per cent behind the company and only a feeling of responsibility towards the builder's altruistic keenness stopped me from openly changing sides.

To round off the visit the assessor stood looking up at the house as a whole, rather as the visiting consultant admires a picture as he leaves. Then he froze, raised his glasses, stared hard, began to

speak and thought better of it. He was not, as far as I could make out, our expert and we could hardly urge him to share with us whatever threats he had spotted. It would be like asking the physician who shines a torch into your mouth whether he has noticed any caries. On his side, he may well have felt that to point out fresh jobs to the builder might compromise his neutrality. However, he seemed to feel he could at least make a few suggestions about how the chimney could be treated and he

gave the builder some tips that sounded like advanced engineering.

After a few jovial exchanges about fraudulent claims, during which my wife tried to explain an ingenious system for preceding them with genuine ones, and a serious interlude in which he tried to convey that he was a kind of arbitrator between the insurance company and us, without quite liking to explain that he was not, as in our ignorance we might be imagining, one of their employees, he drove off. Seeing things

increasingly from his point of view we did not offer him tea. It might have seemed—certainly not a bribe; to anybody who has had tea with us that would be unthinkable—but an assumption that his time was ours.

He never did come back. Once the builder could clamber about up there he found it was obvious there had been nothing at work but age and weather. "It's no good; he knows his job too well," was the hair-raising way he broke the news.

No Flowers, By Request

By DOROTHY DRAKE

VERONICA said "Mother, I'm not going to school to-day. I've got an awful pain."

"You poor thing. Get on with your breakfast, love."

Veronica started battering in the top of her egg. "It's dreadful. Just here. It hurts all the time only sometimes it hurts much more. Mother, look, it's here at the top of my tummy. It's probably appendicitis."

Her mother looked over the top of her paper. "It would be on the other side and further down if it were."

"Well, it hurts there too," said Veronica, leaning over for bread and butter. "Elizabeth Anderson had hers out last year and she brought it to school in a jam jar. But you can die of it if you're not careful. Lots of people die of it because they leave it too long before they have it seen to. I ought to be resting. Has anyone in our family ever died of it? Mother, have they?"

Her mother turned to the fashion page of the paper.

"I doubt it. Unless your Father's Aunt Kitty did. I can't remember."

"Mother, what did Grandma Bates die of?"

"Look, Veronica, hurry up. You've got some toast to eat you know. Grandma Bates? She died of tuberculosis."

"Mother, I was coughing last night. All night long, just cough, cough, cough. It's hereditary too, isn't it?—and now it's been passed on to me. Actually I've suspected it for some time. Miss Crawford was saying only the other day how pale I looked. And I get puffed too going upstairs."

She put her hand to her chest and breathed in dramatically. "There! Did you hear that? Mother, you're not listening." She helped herself to the toast. "I'm very ill. You'll be sorry if I die before lunch time. You'll wish you'd listened to me then. Would Auntie Pat have to come home from Canada?"

"Auntie Pat? No, of course not. She's far too busy to come gadding over here. Anyway, it's too expensive."

"Not come! If I died! Well, that's mean. She's awful if she doesn't. She's my godmother, isn't she? I daresay Daddy would help her with the fare."

"Oh, I expect she'd send some flowers."

"Flowers. Pooh. Who wants flowers? After all I'm her only niece. I'd rather have her here than the flowers. And it would all be so sad—me being so young.

You'd get a lot of sympathy, Mother. Poor Mother. You can have my gold bracelet when I'm gone. Can I have some more tea, please? I should have to wear something white. If I were a bit older I could wear my confirmation dress or wedding dress or something. Mother, what can I wear, Mother?"

"M-m-m. Difficult, isn't it? I daresay we'd find something. Come on now, drink up and get your blazer."

Veronica got down from the table and fetched her blazer from the hall.

"Mother," she said, "You know your new dance dress . . ."

"Oh, no, nobody's going to be buried in that. I've only worn it once."

Veronica was shocked.

"Oh, Mother," she wailed, "but it would look lovely. I'm your only daughter. You wouldn't begrudge it me, would you?"

"Wouldn't I just," said her mother fastening her buttons. "Anyway, it's too big."

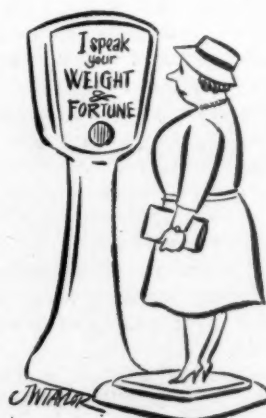
"You could put tucks in it or something. Please, mother."

"Oh, all right," she answered reluctantly. "In the circumstances I can hardly refuse. Wait in the hall a minute."

She went into the kitchen and came back carrying a bottle and spoon. "Open your mouth," she said pouring out the treacly liquid.

"I don't need that," Veronica protested. "I went last night before I got into bed, honestly I did."

"Quickly, now swallow it. Here's your dinner money and some biscuits for break. Hurry or you'll miss the bus."



"You are twelve stone twelve: you will soon be thirteen stone."



"You're not even trying to visualize it on me."

"Mother, will you let me have your white stole as well?"

They walked down the path together and her mother opened the gate.

"I should like to hold my ivory prayer book that Marjorie bought me for Christmas."

Her mother gave her a push.

"Run up to the stop quickly. The bus is coming round the corner."

"Good-bye. Wave to me as I pass, Mother. And don't forget about the prayer book, will you?"

She ran up the road and got on to the bus. As it came towards her, her mother could see Veronica struggling with the window, and as the bus drew near she wound it down and poked out her head.

"Mother—no flowers, by request," she said.

"Round boy wanted for summer holiday only—Bookstall, Broadstairs Station."
East Kent Times and Mail

He's asleep again.

Happy Wanderers

WE have sat on foreign stations in the middle of the night
Doing little sums of currency on greasy paper-bags.
We have stumbled half-exhausted up a seventh pension flight
To a doubtful, itchy mattress that unquestionably sags.

We have travelled third and thirsty over weary miles of plain
With a loaf and half a sausage for our breakfast, lunch and dinner.
We have frittered hours at frontiers and been frisked inside the train,
And departed from the Customs looking noticeably thinner.

We have stayed where no one goes to bed and everybody sings
To the clattering accompaniment of cobbles under clogs.
We have lost our luggage, temper, way, and many other things;
We have sacrificed our bacon; we have even eaten frogs.

And the funny thing about it is the way we swagger home
With our pottery, embroidery and basket-work and views,
Telling lies about the weather and the grandeur that was Rome;
Feeling sorry for the Joneses in a houseboat on the Ouse.

HAZEL TOWNSON

Non-Eye-witness Report

By P. R. BOYLE

THERE was a time when the Scilly Islanders used this pious prayer:

"We pray Thee, O Lord, not that wrecks should happen but that if they do happen Thou wilt guide them into the Scilly Isles for the benefit of the poor inhabitants."

For many years I have felt like this about motor accidents. It has been my hope that if they had to happen they would happen near me. Not too near, of course, just near enough for me to have a good view. There is nothing bloodthirsty in this, because of my rather limiting proviso that nobody should be hurt, or at least not much. What I want is a really spectacular head-on collision, more or less non-injurious, between motor vehicles on the public highway. They happen often enough. Motorists are flung marvelously through doors or windows and find themselves sitting in the roadway, gazing incredulously at the heap of useless scrap that they had polished so lovingly an hour before.

So many times I have felt that the moment must have come, usually when some thruster stormed past the queue at a blind bump or bend. There are so many of these lunatics about that sooner or later I might even see two of them meet. A quarter of a mile north of

Ripley, where the Portsmouth Road turns, narrows and goes up and over, has always seemed to me a very promising spot for this kind of thing, and many a time my foot has hovered over the brake pedal, ready to save me from ploughing into the wrecks ahead. But so far it has never happened.

On the other hand splendid accidents, with miraculous escapes, have occurred almost within sight of me. I have even heard them, and some of the survivors have been my friends, yet the actual spectacle has always eluded me.

And now at last the thing has happened before my very eyes and I have been thwarted once again. I really am the most unfortunate of men. I was there. From my ringside seat I saw the whole thing developing with frightening speed. On a fine dry, blindly curving country road near my home a private car collided, off-wheel to off-wheel, with a hurtling ambulance. You should have heard the noise. The ambulance finished up, chassis twisted and engine under the driver's feet, in the ditch on the other side of the road. You would have thought it a wreck until you saw the car, but the tally of injuries among its five occupants was a cut head, a sprained wrist, sundry bruises and a broken collar-bone.

The car, a six-seater, six-cylinder



saloon weighing over a ton, was knocked—and it is this that I would have dearly loved to see—twelve yards backwards and across the road, spinning partly through the air and partly on its side until it hit the opposite verge, where it bounced again and landed on its roof in the long grass, nose down, facing the wrong way, utterly destroyed.

White-faced men from other cars ran to the wreck and drew forth the driver, whom they found understandably dazed and wondering how to let his wife know that he would be late for lunch. Hot sweet tea, a bit of sponging and three stitches in the left leg, and he was on his way home again, disgruntled but intact.

An absolutely perfect example, in fact, of the kind of thing that for thirty years of uneventful motoring I have hoped to see. And damn it, when at last it happens I have to be the driver of the car.

"By London Underground standards, New York subway stations are old-fashioned, dirty, ill-lit, understaffed and, at night, not altogether safe because of the risk of being what is locally termed 'mugged and rolled.' But next month one of them at least will have a refinement that London lacks. An 'automat' at the station will receive the passengers' soiled clothes and return them, spotlessly dry-cleaned, the same day."

The Times

It seems the least they could do.



It Was Later Than I Thought

IN the middle of the night I was awakened

By a white-bearded man in a loin-cloth. He carried a sickle.

"Time's up," he said. The sweat began to trickle

Down my back. I admit I was considerably shaken.

"Oh, not yet!" I said. He yawned and said "Why not? You've had your fun."

"Fun!" I said indignantly. "Not me! There are too many things I've left undone."

"Like what?" he asked. He looked so tired and old,

I said "Why, you poor thing, you'll catch your—I mean, you'll take cold,

Standing there in that ridiculous outfit—

Not that it doesn't look cute on you." (I was about fit

To be tied and on the point of tears.)

"This old thing," he said. "Why, I've had it for years."

"Well, sit down," I said, and he did, at the foot of the bed,

And wrapped my patch-work quilt around his shoulders and head.

I looked at him sharply. I suppose with that beard and all, that he *was* a man;

But his mind seemed to be on other things, so I began:

"I've never danced with Fred Astaire, or owned a Chippendale chair, or hunted the bear, or taken a dare,

Or bet on a horse, or knitted a purse, or gambled the Bourse, or suffered remorse,

Or cooked Boston beans, or been to New Orleans, or eaten Peek Frean's, or worn blue jeans."

"Women shouldn't wear pants," he grumbled.

"You should talk," I said, "wearing that crazy diaper.

Why, I wouldn't be found—I mean, why, a per-

Son would think you'd get a new one." He mumbled

"I never got around to it. But go on with your saga."

I did. "I've never owned a dress by Balenciaga, or a painting by Zuloaga,

Or danced a fandango, or learned a new lingo, or read Bennett's *Lord Raingo*, or cleaned up at Bingo,

Or gone to Mardi Gras, or owned a wired bra, or eaten *pâté foie*, or drunk at a bar, or read at the Law.

I've seen people off and I've frequently met planes,

But before I—well, I'd like to fly in one of those jet planes."

(He muttered "Flying machines!") I continued: "Or eaten escargots,

Or gone to Chicago, the way that the poor go, by tanker or cargo;

Or dyed my hair yellow, or played on a 'cello, or read Browning's *Sordello*,

Or finished an acrostic, or kindled a joss-stick, or met an agnostic,

Or had a blind date." "Make haste," said my friend, "it's getting late."

You're telling *me*, I thought. But I went on: "I've never bought

A book by Dylan Thomas, or broken a promise,

Or read Dante's *Purgatorio*, or heard Bach's Christmas Oratorio,

Or swum the Hellespont, or ridden an elephant,

Or fathomed the mystery of mediæval history.

I've had a few lovers, I wish I'd had more of them,

And of the Seven Seas I've only sailed four of them.

I've never read Patmore, or sat for my portrait, or bought a thing cut-rate,

Or appeared on a quiz show, or read Conrad's *Nostromo*, or met Perry Como,

Or sat in a patio, or danced an adagio, or seen Joe diMaggio."

I stopped. "I'm sorry," I said, "I've given you the worst time

You ever had." He said "This isn't the first time.

I hear this from all my—er—clients, and hark what I say to them:

If you've never done these things before, you'll probably never do them."

I knew he was right, but he made me so mad,

I wished the earth would open up and swallow him.

He put the quilt down, picked up his scythe. "Come along," he said.

There was nothing for me to do but follow him.

CARLA KLEMPNER



BOOKING OFFICE

Beakers and Barrows

The Archaeology of Wessex. L. V. Grinsell. Methuen, 42/-

WESSEX, kingdom of the West Saxons, included Hampshire, Dorset, Wiltshire, Berkshire, and part of Somerset. Under Egbert and Alfred it developed into the kingdom of England. Thomas Hardy became its poet and novelist in modern times, although the scene of his stories is in fact principally confined to Dorset.

The period from the Saxon settlement at the beginning of the sixth century to our own time provides plenty of history. However, Mr. L. V. Grinsell deals with that longer, no less interesting age—or series of ages—which came to an end with the establishment of the Saxons. The amount of prehistoric material to which he draws attention is really astonishing. By the time we reach the Romans, their roads and villas seem quite recent, the work of yesterday.

The Old Red Sandstone rocks of the Mendip were formed between 320 and 280 million years ago; the Inferior Oolite of the Cotswold, and the Greater Oolite of the Bath area, a mere matter of 145 to 120 million years. The heaths between Dorchester and Southampton and around the Kennet valley between Reading and Newbury, as well as the area of the New Forest, belong to the era between 60 million and one million years, when the chalk became uplifted to form the Downs. Here are the lands where Neolithic man built his megalithic monuments. It was the last million years that was the exciting stretch.

Bones of mammoths have been found between Salisbury and Upavon, and flint implements by the thousand. Cow-hides were probably worn as clothing: antler combs and flint scrapers used for dressing the hides. The Mycenaean double axe and dagger appear at Stonehenge.

Stonehenge and Avebury are, of course, the great glories of prehistoric England. Before going further it may

be as well to make a last despairing plea for recognition of the fact that neither of them had anything whatever to do with the Druids. There is no earthly point in the antics of those who seek to perpetuate this utterly erroneous notion by dressing up and exhibiting themselves from time to time in the neighbourhood of these monuments. Stonehenge and Avebury were constructed at a time probably further from the Druids than the Druids are from ourselves. The Druids were a comparatively short-lived, thoroughly disagreeable, alien importation into Britain. It is questionable whether they deserve to be celebrated at all, even with historical accuracy.

Some of the Bronze Age people made their burials under immense stone slabs (Bulford in Wiltshire, Bradford Peverell in Dorset) which are said to have taken six horses to remove. "It is conceivable

that these interments may be of members of society whose possible return as 'revenants' to molest the living was regarded as particularly undesirable."

Two characters who claim our close attention are the Uffington White Horse and the Cerne Abbas Giant. There are about fourteen White Horses in Wessex, but the Uffington beast has the highest claim to antiquity, situated on its chalk escarpment under an Iron Age hill-fort. The Vale of the White Horse was already so-called by the end of the eleventh century. The coins of the Atrebrates, and the model of a horse found at Silchester, suggest this British tribe was responsible for its construction. That local pride should have insured its survival by scourings at intervals during two thousand years is as remarkable as it is admirable.

That uncompromising club-man, the Cerne Abbas Giant, appears to be no more or less than a representation of Hercules (or Harlequin, as some think the demi-god later evolved himself), which puts him into the Roman-British period. The Emperor Commodus (A.D. 180-93), after a victory against barbarians in Scotland about A.D. 187, declared himself to be the incarnation of Hercules, and assumed the title of Hercules Romanus. It is possible that the Giant celebrates this occasion. Anyway, the Giant was known locally as Helith in the thirteenth century.

There is not space here to mention even a small part of the fascinating material of which Mr. Grinsell speaks. For those who like more recent history there is, of course, Bath, with some of the town exactly as the Romans left it. There are plenty of Roman villas (in which, by the way, Romanized Britons lived, not a species of Italian), and some of their pavements, like that at Whatley near Frome, allowed unfortunately to disappear again after nineteenth century excavation. Wessex is a fantastic repository of relics of almost everything that has ever happened in this island. Mr. Grinsell has worthily chronicled their story. ANTHONY POWELL

NOVEL FACES



XXX—E. M. FORSTER

*Of Italy he used to write; and Ind,
Those Sahibs and Mem sahibs vanished
with the wind.*

To Whom It May Concern. Poems 1952-1957. Alan Ross. *Hamish Hamilton*, 12/6

Mr. Alan Ross's development as a poet since his eloquent first book, *The Derelict Day*, has been in the direction of confirming and enlarging his evident visual and descriptive gifts rather than in deepening the view of life behind them. There is a fine long descriptive poem here about an Arctic convoy attacked by the Germans, which in its sharp energetic rhythms stands rather apart from the rest of the book. Many of the short poems are finely observed and vividly colourful—the racehorses seen as Dufy and Frith and Degas might have seen them, Stanley Matthews offering "the ball as bait . . . like a poisoned chocolate," the boats at Brighton that in winter "wear salt Along gunwales, thin white coverings like capes Drawn in a taut line from stem to stern." William Morris's criticism of Swinburne was: "His poems do not make pictures." It might be a fair criticism of Mr. Ross that his poems often make nothing else. In the long poem, "J.W.51.B," there is a suggestion that Mr. Ross also feels that the charm of sunlight and of colours, of well-told anecdotes and the neat hitting-off of sporting occasions does not take his talent as a poet to full stretch. J. S.

The Darling Buds of May. H. E. Bates. *Michael Joseph*, 12/6

This novelette is more readable and less whimsical than it sounds. The Larkins are a fun-loving, fruit-picking, general-dealing family. Mr. Bates can evoke their overwhelming meals as vividly as he can evoke the English countryside in high summer. Occasionally his characters show queasiness; but that is soon put right with another bumper. When a man from the Inland Revenue calls on them to investigate their tax-dodging they fill him up, make him take a holiday fruit-picking with them and marry him off to their ripest daughter. This, apart from a gymkhana followed by a lush party, is all that happens.

Mr. Bates seems uncertain whether the jolly, generous, extravagant Larkins are admirable or whether they are spivs who get away with it and thus force up the taxes that the ordinary man has to pay. Sometimes the dream of plenty turns to a persecuted taxpayer's nightmare. My favourite sentence is "Pass me the tomato ketchup. I've got a bit of iced bun to finish up." R. G. G. P.

Ten Miles From Anywhere. P. H. Newby. *Cape*, 15/-

Not all of these stories will satisfy those who demand that endings should come with a bang or a quirk, for here is the stuff of life. The author takes an episode, works a little miracle and preserves it for us—a fly in the clarity of amber. His art lies in economy and

attack. Who could resist reading on from here—"In the July of 1915 a man in European dress with two children arrived in a Syrian mountain village on ponies," or here—"Will you sell it?" said the barber . . . or here—"But why doesn't he say why he's coming?" or here—"A long time ago now there was an Armenian shoemaker of Alexandria . . ."? That last sentence begins the pithiest tale of all, for the shoemaker, on condition that he should be buried in Alexandria, left his business to a nephew, who, grudging special transport, dressed the uncle in his best, and took him along as a fellow traveller. The story of the journey might be macabre but is so amusing that we can forgive irreverence. "A Glass of Water"—only four pages—is a delicious study of self-importance; there is pure magic in the title story; but it is difficult to choose the best from among nineteen excellents. B. E. B.

My Dearest Louise. Letters of Marie-Louise and Napoleon, 1813-1814. Edited by Baron C.-F. Palmstierna. *Methuen*, 25/-

The recent discovery in Stockholm of letters from Marie-Louise to Napoleon has made possible this collection, in which one hundred and twenty-seven, with the Emperor's replies, are published for the first time. They cover the chequered eighteen months that end with his escape from Elba and her return to Vienna. Baron Palmstierna puts them against the background of history with a useful running commentary.

Napoleon emerges with affection, economy and an unrealistic hope that Austria might still tip the balance. Up to a point Marie-Louise, very young and silly to be Regent in a crisis, writes with dignity, though often she might have been the anxious wife of a busy commercial traveller (she did introduce cotton knickers to France). Fear that her itinerant husband might catch a chill loomed larger with her than the fate of Europe, and her own absurd hypochondria is seldom absent. Her vows of lifelong constancy ring genuinely, but before Napoleon left Elba she was already von Neipperg's mistress.

E. O. D. K.

William Byrd of Virginia. The London Diary (1717-1721), and Other Writings. Edited by Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling. *Oxford University Press*, New York, 70/-

Diarists impelled to total self-revelation should employ a cypher which posterity cannot crack. With massive scholarship Professor Louis B. Wright, of Washington D.C., and his colleague, who has "made archaic shorthand her hobby," have laid another instalment of the Journal of this Virginia patron quite bare. Byrd owned vast acres of cotton, tobacco and timber; he owned many slaves and he financed slavers to Africa; he made shrewd speculations in London and Amsterdam. He had a foot in both



worlds for he spent thirty years in England, but took a leading part in the affairs of the Colony.

He writes, like Pepys, without inhibition. He describes his frequent amours in detail while in the same breath recording if he had remembered to say his prayers. Though he kept up his Latin and Greek and nearly always had boiled milk for breakfast, he was a hard-bitten rake with a shrewd eye for business. He describes political negotiations ably, but he entirely lacks Pepys's charm. As a record of the mind, the motives, the opinions and the behaviour of a representative Virginian aristocrat, the book is valuable; as a case history it would have interested Dr. Kinsey; as a revelation of personality it is about as attractive as cold mutton.

J. E. B.

AT THE PLAY

Edward the Second
(STRATFORD-ON-AVON)
The Unexpected Guest
(DUCHESS)

OUR puritan climate again stepped in at Stratford, to put an end to our great enjoyment of the Marlowe Society's *Edward the Second* on the new open-air stage by the Avon. This time the deluge came later than it did last week, and failed to dissolve us until we

were nearing Edward's murder. Having survived the middle of the play, which is largely a warrior romp for the indignant barons, it was maddening to be robbed of its fine end; but at least we had been treated to its extraordinary beginning.

That Marlowe is not acted more often is very hard to understand. If it is only a feeling that he is mock-Shakespeare, we are forgetting that he came first; his Edward and Shakespeare's *Richard the Second* are strikingly similar, but it was Edward who led the way. The early scenes in which the young king, sensitive under his arrogance, struggles to keep his oily Gaveston against the fury of the court, are rich in poetry and exciting drama, and more than that contain an astonishing statement of the tragedy of unnatural love. In them this is accepted as a fact, as an inevitable part of life, and after all the clever obliquities we have suffered in the last few years, obliquities wistful, psychological, and often sickeningly sentimental, how refreshing it is.

REP SELECTION

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, until August 30th.

Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch, *Pygmalion*, until August 30th.

Northampton Rep, *Waltz of the Toreadors*, until August 23rd.

Theatre Royal, York, *Sailor Beware!*, until August 23rd.

Nearly four hundred years have left these scenes a valid appendix to the Wolfenden Report.

The characters are balanced most superbly. We are sorry for Edward, far too intelligent not to know the ruin he is making, as at the same time we feel for his desperate queen. And the attitude of the barons, with the running of England on their hands, is reasonable enough; it is not so much Edward's morals they object to, as the muddle he is causing in the State. The clash is complete, soluble only by death.

It is indeed an achievement for a university company to present a play of such emotional intensity with so little loss of subtlety. In Toby Robertson's production the voices are beautifully flexible; every word is audible without ranting, and the acting uncommonly powerful for so young a cast. By tradition they are anonymous, but one will remember Edward's agony and Gaveston's dreadful fawning and the fiery spirit of the young Mortimer.

There are things to criticize. The set, made of hurdles, suggests sheep, and the iron framework before it, that might have borne a royal tent, simply gets in the way, while scenes follow one another so quickly that the shrubbery is sometimes distractingly full of waiting actors. But these blemishes are not serious, and it is good news that the production is coming shortly to the Lyric, Hammer-smith.

The Unexpected Guest seems to me minor Agatha Christie, in which her ingenuity has almost over-reached itself. At the start you would say that the man slumped in the chair by the French window has been shot by his wife, hiding round the corner; but by the end you will wrongly have suspected nearly every name in the programme except Ingersoll and Kayser Bondor. This switching of suspicion is adroit, and though one vital motive goes unexplained, the final ace is a beauty. Afterwards one stands back in admiration as at, say, the solid mechanism of a Tompion; and yet even this cannot quite dim the memory of long stretches of very conventional narrative. Unfortunately these are hardly relieved by the acting, some of which is surprisingly bad. Renée Asherson and Nigel Stock carry the chief burden smoothly but with too little variety. An original spark is visible only in three smaller parts, Violet Farebrother's pride-bound dowager, Winifred Oughton's touchy nannie and Paul Curran's endearingly shiftily valet.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Expresso Bongo (Saville—30/4/58), Paul Scofield in musical satire on crooning. *Any Other Business* (Westminster—16/4/58), board-room excitements. *Living for Pleasure* (Garrick—16/7/58), Dora Bryan fizzing through a good-tempered revue. ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Vertigo—*A Cry from the Streets*

IN Scott Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon* Stahr, the producer, talking to Boxley, the "literary" writer, describes in detail the actions of an imaginary girl who comes into an office and answers a telephone. After a time he pauses, and "Go on," said Boxley smiling. "What happens?" "I don't know," said Stahr. "I was just making pictures."

Again and again, in the years since I first read that, I have recalled the phrase "just making pictures" as a brief summing-up of the indescribable quality that a real film-maker can get into nearly every foot of his films: the overtone, the



Edward the Second

Piers Gaveston

Queen Isabel

(Anonymous members of the Cambridge University Marlowe Society)

PUNCH IN THE THEATRE

A light-hearted historical record of the theatre over the past one hundred and seventeen years in the form of *Punch* drawings and caricatures is on exhibition at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, and the Playhouse, Derby. The exhibition will tour the country, staying for one month at most of the principal repertory theatres. In London an exhibition of original theatre drawings from *Punch* is on display at the Saville Theatre.

obscure *something* that keeps you watching with concentrated attention and pleasure the simplest sequence of actions in the most ordinary scene. It isn't a question of violent and unusual movement and it is not, as Boxley assumed it was, a question of dialogue: it is simply *making pictures*, doing what a film should do and only a film can do. And it is above all else this quality—forgive the long build-up, but I think it helps to convey what I mean—that makes *Vertigo* (Director: Alfred Hitchcock) worth seeing and enjoyable, even though it is ill-balanced as a story and mixed, disconcertingly mixed, in style and effect and mood. It makes an odd and in some ways unsatisfactory impression as a whole, but I found it extraordinarily interesting.

Vertigo is the affliction of the central character, Scottie Ferguson, a San Francisco detective who has resigned from the police after a terrifying experience that kept him hanging from a high roof behind—or before, I forget which—the credit titles. He is retained for the delicate job of keeping watch on an old acquaintance's wife, who has been behaving strangely, and in due course he (James Stewart) falls in love with the baffling lady (Kim Novak). To detail what happens is impossible without giving away something that is revealed in its proper place as the film proceeds. It is a surprise, but suspense develops until the final sequence, which has all the usual Hitchcock power and, of course, works up to a height involving Scottie's vertigo.

What some people will find upsetting is the lack of conventional shape in the piece. The light mood of some of Scottie's early scenes with a faithful girl friend who is a fashion artist (Barbara Bel Geddes) makes her disappearance from the story seem capricious. But it has then become a story of a different kind, in which such a mood would be wrong; and though that change in itself may be found upsetting, it is really the essential point of the thing as a whole—that Scottie, on the way to recovery, is gripped by a sort of vertigo of the spirit as well as of the nerves.

Apart from all this, the film is continuously pleasing superficially, with brilliant, beautifully-designed exterior and interior scenes in VistaVision and subtle Technicolor (photography: Robert Burks), good playing (a superb sketch of a coroner by Henry Jones), and that all-important extra quality of sheer interest that I mentioned to begin with.

I was agreeably surprised by much of *A Cry from the Streets* (Director: Lewis Gilbert). True, it is a simple sentimental little tale contrived to show off the talents of some clever children and a well-loved comedian (Max Bygraves), full of "recognition" points which amuse people only because they faithfully reproduce situations familiar in everyday life, or everyday legend; but it's refreshing for once



John (Scottie) Ferguson—JAMES STEWART

Vertigo

to hear something like genuine Cockney accents among the children (though there has to be a parenthetical reference to Australia to cover Colin Petersen's), and Mr. Bygraves reveals himself as an intelligent straight actor, though he has only pretty conventional things to do.

The story, from a novel by Elizabeth Coxhead, concerns a Children's Welfare Officer and the "deprived children" at a reception centre, the three or four most interesting of whom are by a useful coincidence "deprived" for exactly the three or four most usual text-book reasons. In the process of helping them, the dedicated young woman (Barbara Murray) finds a husband (guess who), and as the most appealing child now has nobody left, what more natural than—? Exactly; long before the end you know what will happen to the principal characters. The suspense climax, too, though effective as suspense, is very artificial. But the children are worth seeing, and there is much more good in the picture than you might expect.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

We were also shown *Nor the Moon by Night*, about an African game-warden and the brave girl who goes out to marry him—a sort of attempt at an African equivalent of *Harry Black* (6/8/58) but aimed at teen-age woman's-magazine readers. *The Goddess* is good (review next week), *Ice Cold in Alex* (9/7/58) can probably still be found in London, and *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57) continues.

No Time for Sergeants (6/8/58), very funny indeed until the forced and

exaggerated ending, is one of the releases. Another is the *Titantic* story *A Night to Remember* (16/7/58), which most critics except me thought very highly of. There is a good reissue, *Blackboard Jungle* (28/9/55). RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE BALLET

Feliks Parnell's Ballet from Poland
(SADLER'S WELLS)
Western Theatre Ballet
(LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

NO ONE is misled, I imagine, by the term *ballet* being applied indiscriminately to all and every sort of dancing on stage or platform. Indeed, in its original sense of a display of foreign dress and manners it is the right word for the entertainment offered by the compact company of twenty-two dancers from Poland which is having a short season in Islington.

To all who think vaguely of ballet as a high-brow affair of classical serenity and mysterious lyrical technique alternating with purely abstract motions for the delight of the connoisseur, I can say at once that so long as the vigorous young men and women of Poland stick to their national tradition they abound in gaiety, broad fun and immense vitality. Here is no dancing *sur les points* but good

GEOFFREY WILLANS

We record with sorrow the death of Geoffrey Willans, whose schoolboy character Molesworth climbed the first steps towards his national status in the pages of *Punch* just before the war.

earthy stuff deriving from folklore and brought to the pitch of style and virtuosity demanded by normal standards of stage performance.

The company falls away, however, when it strays beyond those limits, as, for instance, into a sort of cabaret version of *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune*; or essays an imitation, brilliant as such, of an Indian Dancer. A little morality, *Good and Evil*, with Good impersonated as a quasi-episcopal figure by Feliks Parnell and Evil most devilishly personified by Włodzimierz Traczewski, is spoiled only by two Tempresses straight out of a burlesque joint. None the less, it has its distinctly good dramatic moments.

On the home ground Mr. Parnell's "ritual in seven scenes," *Peasant Wedding*, is highly attractive for its charming folksy naïveté and the opportunity it gives for the whole company to swirl and leap, spin and stamp with amazing speed and an infectious air of high spirits which soon spreads to the auditorium. Similarly, the final offering *Harvest Festival* allows scope for much the same ingredients mixed in different proportions.

Between these two spectacular items there is plenty of bucolic frolic and some striking individual performances such as those of Krystyna Zalewska. Her sense of comedy and acrobatic skill are the making of *Dancing Woman* and in *A Country Duel* she is sparkling and demure by turns as a young maid courted by three suitors. The sole note of pathos is beautifully touched in by 1940, a vignette, in which Mr. Parnell and Maria Lapinska, the company's leading lady, are father and daughter, dancers from the opera who scratch a living during the German occupation of Warsaw by dancing in the streets of the ghetto. Miss Lapinska's versatility has evidently no little classical training behind it.

The two leading male dancers Mr. Traczewski and Edward Pokross have an exuberance of virility which carries them with speed and power through dazzling convolutions. Throughout the evening pleasure is heightened by the brilliant dresses and ingeniously simple stage settings by E. Soboltowa.

The twelve dancers who compose the Western Theatre Ballet also have infectious charm and enthusiasm as a principal asset. They opened their well-balanced programme at Hammersmith with *Impromptu*, a plotless and boisterously danced piece of their own devising, and followed it with a romantic *pas de deux*, *The Enchanted Rose Garden*, by Peter Darrell to music by Glazunov, distinguished by imaginative scenery and effective costumes, by Derek West. The programme of the opening night included *The Prisoners*, a powerfully conceived and executed work which has already been seen in London and is the company's most impressive achievement. Suzanne Musitz shows in this a developed dramatic sensibility. *Pulcinella*, for

which Elizabeth West has used Stravinsky's music, is a light-hearted affair danced by the whole company with verve and wit. Ronald Emblen in the title role was outstanding. C. B. MORTLOCK

ON THE AIR

Pastures New

IT has become almost a tradition in this country that a dance-band leader, having established himself as a household word by years of toil with his back to the audience, should one day turn and blossom forth to show some new and unexpected talent. Thus, to name a few, we have had Mr. Preager devoting his attention to the discovery of dream girls, Mr. Jackson putting on gramophone records with a cat, Mr. Hylton swelling the teeming ranks of impresarios, Mr. Ros controlling the destinies of night-clubs, and Mr. Winnick importing English parlour games at great expense from America. These, you will notice, were not jazz men: they were largely slow-fox and tango specialists. Jazz men tend to be sober, dedicated chaps with long faces. One could hardly imagine Barber or Lyttelton or even Dankworth, suddenly turning his hand to anything frivolous: but that is a separate mystery, something for discussion at perhaps a higher level.

Perhaps our most popular band-leader-turned-entertainer is Henry Hall, whose "Guest Nights" started a trend. His secret seems to be that although he has grown white in the business, he hasn't changed a bit. He couldn't announce a singer without fluffing back in the days of the crystal-set, and he conscientiously preserved that dithery technique right through to the advent of the 24-inch screen. He might be said to have been born with a silver gimmick in his mouth. He also has a kindly appearance, and a diffident, almost self-effacing personality which thousands find enchanting. Some of the more acutely embarrassing moments in the history of radio and television have occurred during Mr. Hall's introductory bouts of cross-talk with visiting comedians: but since this is now expected of him, his admirers would feel hurt and cheated if he began to show signs of improvement. The English dearly love a touch of the amateur.

"Henry Hall's Guest Night" (BBC), to which I shall long be grateful for allowing me to see and hear Anneliese Rothenberger, has a new and powerful rival in Jack Payne's "Words and Music" (BBC). The pattern is much the same: Mr. Payne, backed by an orchestra, introduces us to his guests, who either perform or chat. But there are differences in this show. The orchestra concerned is of an awesome size, and Mr. Payne is seen actually to conduct it, through whole numbers, without any sugar-coating of dancing girls. (Mr. Payne loves the florid arrangement, the symphonic treatment, the

solemn presence of oboes and French horns.) Then again, there are no comics: we are concerned with words and music, and Mr. Payne seems to be bent on keeping his show free from any taint of music-hall.

Most of all, the difference lies in Jack Payne himself. His interest in popular music, dance music, light entertainment music, is essentially serious. He has a deep knowledge of the subject, and he will stand for no nonsense about it. He tells us of its history, its development, the uses to which it has been put; and he introduces us not only to practitioners in its various branches, but to the people who have helped to create and nurture it. He has strong opinions—a novelty in itself in a show of this kind. He has mellowed since his disc-jockey programme, in which he was grumpy and cantankerous—he recently presented Bertice Reading in a rock-'n'-roll number, although insisting on a full symphonic accompaniment—but he still sets his face sternly against the trivial, the catchpenny stunt, the second-rate.

I do not find him entirely successful as an interviewer. He is often abrupt. He sometimes gives an impression of impatience as he steers a conversation towards the conclusion he has planned. All the same, the mixture he serves is original. For older viewers it should revive agreeable memories, and the youngsters will find it instructive as well as entertaining, if they care at all about the how and why of "pops."

HENRY TURTON



(Words and Music)

JACK PAYNE



H. P. Stampede

NEVER in the long history of the City has a revolution been completed so quickly as that which has transformed the Hire Purchase finance picture. Six weeks or so ago the subject was, with one or two possible exceptions, regarded as rather vulgar. No one tarred with the H.P. finance brush would have been deemed a fit person to be a member of the City Club. When in 1954 the Commercial Bank of Scotland, far-sightedly and greatly daring, became the owner of an H.P. finance company, the move aroused the kind of hostility, criticism and comment that would meet a member of the public entering Claridges in his shirt and braces.

All that is now changed. Little more than a month ago the manipulator of the Lombard Lane telescope began to discern a few portents of change and dared to suggest that "the day may come when banks take a more direct interest in the finance of hire purchase than they do to-day." Never has a random shot found its target with such speed. With a haste that belies all the traditions of British banking, all the concern for slow evolution, growth and dignity, every major bank is now in process of acquiring a stake in one of the hire purchase finance companies.

The door was opened when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, early in July, gave his revised instructions to the Capital Issues Committee, and re-instated consumer credit to the list of projects for which additional capital might henceforth be raised. First through the chink that was thus opened went Barclays Bank to which a 25 per cent participation in the capital of United Dominions Trust was offered (an operation which has aroused some criticism because the shares were issued below the then market price and without reference to the other U.D.T. shareholders who might be deemed to have some interest in this transaction). Then one by one the other giants of British joint stock banking, and some of the

more specialized merchant banks joined the rush. They have done so with a wide variety of techniques, some remaining content with part ownership, others striving to get complete control, some securing their stake by putting up new capital, others by making a bid for the existing shares.

H.P. finance won't be the same again after this stampede. There are said to be one thousand two hundred firms in the game, most of them one-man businesses; a small tradesman with spare cash going into partnership with a local garage to finance the sale of cars. This multitude will tend to disappear. The competition of the bigger boys now booted and spurred by the big banks will set a pace which the smaller fry will be unable to match. A gigantic consolidation movement is likely.

From this will emerge more credit for hire purchase transactions and, it is to be hoped, cheaper terms. These terms are more expensive than is

generally assumed. When a £100 article is sold on H.P. terms for £110 payable in twelve equal instalments, the rate of interest is not 10 per cent as the simpleton might believe, but close on 20 per cent because the capital debt is being reduced from the moment the first instalment is paid over. This is dear money even though part of the charge be earmarked for collection expenses, etc. It is also dear money in the light of the extremely small loss ratio on these transactions.

H.P. will not be the same again, nor perhaps will banking. One wit has already depicted a bank customer fixing a £100 overdraft with his bank manager and inquiring what would be the down-payment and the monthly instalments?

Among the likely beneficiaries of this movement is the group which sells more "on the never-never" than any other in this country: Mr. Isaac Wolfson's Great Universal Stores. "Gussies" are worth holding. LOMBARD LANE

In the Country



Educating Archers

ANY farmer's boy caught singing "To plough and sow, and reap and mow," etc., should be returned for further instruction to his unit of the Rural Industries Bureau, for unless he is on some remote hill croft he won't do much with the scythe, he'll be correcting stoppages on the pick-up baler or combine harvester. Few lovers will ever again look at one another in the happy field of hay; the stuff comes out in tightly wired bales, and so does the corn unless it's thrashed and bagged as the harvester goes along.

The Rural Industries Bureau, which helps countrymen to face mechanization and other modern competitive conditions, sends instructors out into the highways and hedges to train craftsmen on the spot. Last year they ran eight courses on the baler, six on tractor equipment, and six on the combine harvester. The pace is too hot for the old stylized Mummersetshire yokel muttering "Dang me if I beain't all

moithered with they new-fangled machines," for modifications of these implements appear so rapidly that skilled engineers sometimes appeal to the Bureau for information that not even the publicity departments of the manufacturers can give.

Engineering is only one of a dozen or so chairs occupied by these itinerant professors lecturing to village universities. Few seek to graduate in farriery, but it's there if you want it. Hunters, hacks and racehorses are practically the only candidates for shoeing now. It's a heavy job—you remember the muscles of the Village Blacksmith's brawny arms—and so few boys take to it that when the Bureau's farrier retired it wasn't worth appointing a full-time replacement. A blacksmith's toiling, with rejoicing and sorrowing if any, is almost entirely done as part of a general engineering business.

If boat-building or woodworking are your fancies they're in the curriculum too. You can try your luck with a machine for burnishing cricket balls, and there is an experimental willow-drying plant enabling you to make a cabin at that girl's gate in half the time.

Wrought iron, furniture, baskets, woollens, pottery, bricks, saddlery—what d'ye lack? They've got it all, and the charge on Government funds doesn't seem unreasonable—£137,832 in a year. Sounds to me better value for money than part of one H-bomb.

LESLIE MARSH

FOR
WOMEN

Idylls of The Queen

A HUNDRED years ago or so, when Mr. Tennyson was busy with his Lancelots and Guineveres, an expert ear might have detected the sound of a steel pen scratching away somewhere in the neighbourhood of Balmoral. A gracious sovereign was busy writing idylls of her own. And when the author of *Coningsby* murmured "We authors, ma'am," over the small ringed hand of Queen Victoria, the future of the Conservative Party, of Primrose Day, and of Benjamin Disraeli, first Earl of Beaconsfield, were alike assured. Victoria Regina was touched to the heart.

She had not, admittedly, written three controversial novels; nor was she, like her Prime Minister, to be serialized on the Home Service. But somewhere on the topography shelves, under Victoria (Queen), you will find that Royal best-seller of 1868: *Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands, 1848-1861*.

The royal author, or so it seems, became a royal author by accident. One day at Balmoral she ventured to show her impromptu journal to a loyal subject. He suggested an edition for private circulation and then, more loyally, drew golden pictures of world-wide royal sales. Early in 1868 the massive book appeared, was followed by two illustrated editions, by translations into Gaelic, German, Spanish and even Swedish; and Mr. Theodore Martin, the biographer, taken ill on a visit to Osborne, was deprived of a royal visit to his sick room: the Queen would have liked to go to Mr. Martin, "but ever since she came in at a quarter past five she has done *nothing* but read the reviews in the newspapers

... She sends one review that is very gratifying, which Mr. Martin has *probably* not seen. Pray, let the Queen have it back after dinner."

"I wished for Landseer's pencil," wrote the royal author, watching the salmon-spearing near Balmoral in 1850. It is something like a Landseer, her own panorama of deer and ptarmigan and kilted gillies, of ponies, plaids, and pibrochs in the distance. It is an unsophisticated rural world, from the tartan-carpeted sitting-room at Balmoral (happily illustrated in full colour) to the Highland inn where Victoria Incognita dines off "soup, hodge-podge, mutton broth with vegetables, which I did not much relish, fowl with white sauce, good roast lamb, very good potatoes, beside one or two other dishes, which I did not taste, ending with a good tart of cranberries." It is some tribute to the royal digestive powers that after such a banquet Victoria

Incognita was able to dash off another page of her journal.

Mr. Arthur Helps, who ventured to edit the manuscript, had, we are told, "many struggles with Her Majesty about what he thought her too homely style." But "how could Mr. Helps expect *pains* to be taken,"

asked his sovereign, "when she wrote late at night, suffering from headaches and exhaustion, and in dreadful *haste*, and not for publication?" Needless to say, Her Majesty won the day; and "it was," so she promptly informed Mr. Theodore Martin, "the simplicity of the style, and the absence of all appearance of writing for effect, that had given her book such immense and *undeserved* success."

In 1884 the royal author published the second volume of her "unpretending

record," which went into three editions, and even into Italian as *Alcune pagine dal giornale della vita di S. M. la Regina Victoria nell' Alta Scozia*... This reception, like the first, was "very gratifying." True, there is a Betjeman melancholy over *More Leaves from the Journal*; true, a Victorian gloom hangs heavy over Balmoral now that dearest Albert has died; but la Regina Victoria, though not amused, must have kept a sense of humour or she could not have told the world how she was thrown out of a carriage near Altnagivthasach and could only find claret to wash the dust off her face. And there is something touching in the sight of the royal author and the exiled Empress Eugénie eating trout for their tea on the banks of the Gelder. John Brown had cooked it in oatmeal, and the dear tactful Empress professed to like it extremely, "and said it would be her dinner." What the royal author thought is not recorded. One hopes she relished it more than the mutton broth with vegetables.

JOANNA RICHARDSON

☆

Comprehensive Schools

RECENTLY I read in a London local newspaper that the six-year-old daughter of a hairdresser had been helping her parents in their salon for over a year, climbing on to a stool to do the perming and pin-curling. Her definite views on hair styles were quoted.

I've always thought what an advantage it must be to have had a small business as part of one's early home. Best of all, one of those cosy little general shops with a back-parlour from which any alert young student can goggle through and hear all the gossip and get her arithmetic straight from the awful price of everything. Regulars forming discussion groups would reveal



many of the snags of a naughty world; there'd be pointers in the sales-talk of commercial travellers and even in the gabble of muddlers who want it on the slate till Saturday.

When I was a child (which wasn't exactly last week) money was hardly ever discussed in my vicarage home. Meanwhile little Bessie at the village shop was often behind the counter totting up cash and sizing up customers, standing on sacks of rolled oats to reach the cocoa. (There wasn't nearly so much fussing then over school attendance and feet on the oats.) At what might have been a tender age Bessie was observing tactics likely to be useful throughout anyone's life: e.g. you must prod and sniff and complain to land the squashed tomato in someone else's half-pound; if you want to win a dispute you must talk and keep on talking and never mind the repetitions.

Bessie was a dab hand with the scales. Serving my penn'orths she would angle tirelessly for the final fragment of toffee to make exact weight, never giving away a lick of anything. While I was absorbing polite negatives such as mustn't show-off, grab, interrupt, contradict, etc., it was largely by showing-off, grabbing, interrupting and contradicting that she became such a help to her Mum.

What opportunities one can miss for lack of practice in hasty calculation and blunt demand! Out comes the diffident line, the self-unselling cue, when some hoped-for decision might be only a breath away. And why did one accept that deadly invitation, buy that loathsome hat, agree to serve on that futile committee . . . ? Why? Because Bessie is here, there, and everywhere, riding down the tactful evasion and putting on the pressure. KATHLEEN HEWITT

Holiday Reading

"BRITISH holiday reading brings much-needed relaxation," say librarians. "Father lounges in his deck-chair with a thriller while even mother may put her feet up now and then with a light romance." This is the sort of nonsense librarians get away with every August. Take a look at the facts.

Up in Cumberland farmhouses fully furnished ex. plate and linen, fathers are wrestling fretfully two afternoons a week with the wrong morning paper for

the day before, brought back on the bus with the fish. They slam their way through the fashion pages looking for the sport. They don't like the print and they don't trust the news. The whole thing is a nightmare. Luckier are little boys immured in wet Cornish pebbledash villas. They are only brooding over the agricultural quarterly which was all the shop had besides Little Noddy. *The Pick-up Baler: Whither?*

Meanwhile in Norfolk, where the pop. is 3,405 and E.C. on a Wed., small girls are learning the guidebook so as to shout it in bed to brothers, while down in Littlehampton a Yorkshire estate agent of all people has found an Observer's Book of Dogs under a fruit-bowl. He's ticked off twenty-three dogs as seen. It makes his walks quite exciting. A hard core of bathers has packed *War and Peace* again to weight the towels with, and this year *By Love Possessed* makes a sophisticated elbow-prop for the sort of people who drink claret out of plastic cups.

Simpler types are sitting in hotel lounges working through the specialized magazines next to the coffee. All they want in the world at the moment is to master process engraving or hens. A similar thirst has attacked young parents in Thanet boarding-houses. Norwegians

have lent them picture papers and they're working out the jokes.

Then of course there are all the schoolchildren about to start *Red-gauntlet* any minute for their holiday task. But you couldn't call that relaxation, any more than it is for mothers who've found the paper-back American detection that father gulped on the train and are sitting up through the night finishing it or bust.

ANGELA MILNE

☆

To an Ice Cream Van

VAN so white and fat and sleek,
When your merry horn doth blow
There's a thought I fain would speak;
Not what you're expecting, though;

Not a word on how you come
Every Thursday, fine or rain;
Not a hint of what a Mum
Thinks on hearing you again—
How she feels her cosmic view
Slip, with you about the place,
Till it kind of settles to
Ices v. the Human Race—

No, I have a simple plea,
Just a point at which I carp;
Must your gay arpeggio be
One note flat and two notes sharp?
ANDE



"Can't you see if it's any better on the other channel?"

Toby Competitions

No. 30.—For Your Library List

COMPETITORS are invited to submit an extract from an enticing publisher's blurb, in 1958 fashion, for one of the following: *Pickwick Papers*, *Pepys's Diary*, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, *Hamlet*, *Lysistrata*, *Pride and Prejudice*. It should be assumed that the work has just been written, but no comment should be made on its antiquated style. Maximum 120 words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive Toby bookmarks. Entries (any number, but each on a separate piece of paper and accompanied by a separate entry token, cut out from the bottom left-hand corner of this page) by first post on Friday, August 29, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 30, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 27 (The Bard Abroad)

A good time was had by all. The task was to choose four to six lines of blank verse from Shakespeare's plays and arrange them to form a comment on the English on holiday abroad. The English came out of it very badly, only one entrant having anything complimentary to say about us as holidaymakers. Much

ingenuity was shown, and all competitors deserve praise for the pains-taking way they went about the job. After eliminating those who defaulted by using half-lines, prose lines, or lines from *The Rape of Lucrece*, there remained a gratifyingly large number of "quotables" and near-misses. The prize was awarded to:

J. E. HEDGES,
12, TARLINGTON ROAD
COVENTRY
WARWICKSHIRE

who with great cunning managed to tackle the subject from a particularly difficult angle, with this entry:

After a voyage—he hath strange places
cramm'd
With silken coats, and caps, and golden
rings,
That are recorded in this schedule here.
There must he stay, until the officer
Hath full relation to the penalty.
Can any face of brass hold longer out?

There follows a selection from the runners-up, as generous as space permits.

With bag and baggage: many a thousand
of us,
And but the backs of Britons seen, all
flying
So tediously away. The poor condemned
English

Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve.

I do dismiss you to your several countries,
But, in this changing, what is your intent?
Rev. J. W. M. Vyse, *Great Braxted Rectory, Kelvedon, Essex.*

Thus come the English with full power
upon us,
Peering in maps, for ports, and piers, and
roads.

And the deep-drawing barks do there
disgorge

The spinsters and the knitters in the sun.
Miss E. J. Lines, 72, *Riverside Gardens, London, W.6.*

Make holy-day: your rye-straw hats put
on

To see the wonders of the world abroad,
Even to the frozen ridges of the Alps,
Wherever Englishman durst set his foot.
To reel the streets at noon, and stand the
buffet

That you might kill your stomach on your
meat.

S. J. Morley, "*Tanglewood*," 113, *The Ridgeway, Cuffley, Herts.*

When I am in my coach, which stays for
us,

Sir, at the furthest for a week or two,
Although not valu'd to the money's worth,
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,
Full of comparisons and wounding flouts
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy.
William A. Funnell, *Holly Tree Cottage, Stalisfield Green, Faversham, Kent.*

Is this a holiday? What! know you not?
Is not their climate foggy, raw and dull?
Nature is fine in love: and where 'tis fine
Do but behold yon poor and starved band,
Brought to this shore: and by my
prescience,
Bearing their birthrights proudly on their
backs.

Michael Campion, 43, *Pembroke Road, Clifton, Bristol, 8.*

THE MOTORIST'S WIFE

In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:
On Saturday we will return to France.
Our waggon is prepar'd, and time revives
us;

But this exceeding posting, day and night,
It wearies me: you say, it wearies you.
Say what thou canst, I'll go along with
thee.

E. T. C. Frost, 35, *Wellington Road, Hatch End, Middlesex.*

France is revolted from the English quite;
They want their porridge, and their fat
bull-bèeves,

And rail upon the hostess of the house—
"What, no attendance? no regard? no
duty?"

Their clothes are after such a pagan cut
too,

That fright the maidens of the villagery.
Elizabeth Steele, *The White House, 7, Devonshire Avenue, Sutton, Surrey.*

§ §

"The windy weather we've been having lately has certainly played havoc with those short skirts . . . I've never seen so much frilly underwear displayed outside the shop windows . . . Couldn't we have something more becoming and suitable to our climate next year, please . . .?"

Reader's letter in the *Star*

How about shorter underwear?

CHESTNUT GROVE

Lewis Baumer took up the "social cut" from Du Maurier and brought it into the world of the twentieth century.



INVITATIONS WITH AN OBJECT.

THE COUNTESS OF BROKELEIGH AT HOME, WEDNESDAY, JULY, 3, 4.30—7.
BROKELEIGH HOUSE, BELGRAVE SQUARE. Admission £5 5s. Od.

July 3 1907

Diary of a Fashion Model

By Susan Chitty

WEDNESDAY, February 5th. Off to Sardinia the day after to-morrow! Fonteyn rang to say an airline is flying *Fable* out to show you don't catch malaria, and though we're poor we must go because *Gloss* did their resort clothes on Zanzibar. We'd be there for three days, she said, and I was to go to the office right away and start trying on resort clothes.

Thursday, February 6th. All day trying on resort clothes in the model room. One certainly resorts to some odd things for a holiday. Lady Faircatch isn't coming because she doesn't write English or speak Italian, so she spent the morning trying on all the hats in the fashion cupboard and not talking. Ghost is coming instead.

Friday, February 7th. Well, here I am sitting next to Ghost in a big brass bed in Arghelo (sorry, Ghost says it's Alghero), Sardinia, and although there isn't a view of the bay outside which Ghost says there ought to be, there are mules being unsaddled which is much more fun. I even *think* the fleas are teasing, and the wine certainly tasted of tar. Isn't it wonderful?

Actually, we were meant to stay at the Excelsior on the front, but when we got there we found it hadn't been built yet (in fact the front itself still seemed to be under construction). But they've promised it'll be there for the season so Ghost can leave it in the travel article. She's writing the article because we've got to repay the airline by saying what a *Fable*-type resort Alghero is. She had to write it before we came because of the rush, but she'll be able to change it in galley proof.

We landed three hours ago in brilliant sunshine and had dinner (whole lobster each and four bottles of wine) in a sort of glass cabin looking over the fishing port. Pox calls us his harem and says he's going to make us play net-ball for him on the beach to-morrow, which is silly, of course, as you need eight, but perhaps he was seeing double.

Fonteyn and Dolores have both turned the colour of sardine fishermen, but I saw them putting it on in the 'plane.

Saturday, February 8th. Got started rather late because we couldn't find the beach. In the end we found an old fisherman called Salvatore. He was fishing with a long piece of string on the harbour bar and whenever he caught anything he popped it in his mouth, gave us an enormous wink and *swallowed it alive*. Two baby eels, a small crab and a miniature octopus went down while we were watching.

Pox was in ecstasies about him and asked if Dolores and I could do it too in our Bermuda shorts. Salvatore said yes if we photographed him sitting on his mother's tomb first, but he seemed to think 100 lire would do as well.

We asked him about the beach and he said there was a Lido a few miles out of the town and the only way to get there was by hackney cab. Luckily he had a friend who had one though it looked as if it had been put in moth-balls in 1902 and had not been shaken out properly. The horse (a dear old liver chestnut with a bog spavin in the near hind) looked about the same age.

But Pox sailed off into another ecstasy and said we must be two little Daisy Millers in sprigged organdie and sun-shades, so Fonteyn hustled us back to the hotel to change. By the time we'd spread three copies of *Oggi* on the seats (I think the cab was used as a chicken house at night) and Pox had got himself organized for colour (it always makes him fidgety) the sun had gone and a steady wind had started to blow in from the sea. Salvatore said it was the Sirocco and it wouldn't stop till May.

The drive to the Lido took thirty-five minutes and when we got there all we could see was a Ladies shaped like a gun emplacement and a couple of peeling cabins. It had also started to rain. Of course that wouldn't have mattered (if you can do chiffon frocks in the snow you can do bikinis in the rain I suppose), but the trouble was Pox had an awfully original idea he'd got from Willi Stein which consisted of photographing the *shadows* of the models on the beach and showing the actual clothes in little insets. There wasn't a shadow anywhere, so we got back into the cab and asked for the main square. The drive back to the town was quite slow and looking for the main square was even slower as it turned out there wasn't one (Ghost'll have to cross out about sipping martinis in the arcades) and also it was the time of day when the main street is so full of people getting ready to digest lunch and looking at what the others are wearing that it was almost impossible to get down it.



After a lunch of Fried Mediterranean at the hotel (what Salvatore was eating, only dead) we spent the afternoon being photographed against donkeys; palaces, old women etc.

After that we met an awful man. We had finished photographing and were sitting in a bar comparing Sardinian apéritifs (they all taste of syrup of figs) and wondering what to do if sun didn't shine to-morrow and where to have dinner, when a man with one eye and skewbald shoes sat down at the next table. He was obviously listening to us and when Fonteyn said "I'll grow fins if I eat another fish" he swivelled round in his chair and said "Say, do you mind if I butt in?" in a strong Italian accent. It turned out that he was a Neapolitan haberdasher, that he had lived in Chicago, and that the best food in Alghero was to be found at the Widow Semprini's, down at the petrol pumps.

"There are biftecks *così*," he said pretending to chop off his left hand.

"Spaghetti *così*," and he flung up his arms.

"Then fruit, then cheese, then bread, then wine, then extras," and he turned an imaginary mangle.

"And all for a couple dimes," and he rubbed his index finger and his thumb together. We decided to go.

It took a long time to get there because he had to stop when he talked to leave energy for the gestures, and he talked most of the time and quite often shook hands with us all in turn to show how glad he was to have met us.

He was more like an Italian than anyone I have ever met.

The widow's restaurant was an ordinary room in a flat, and we had to go through a kitchen where the widow was stirring a cauldron to get to it. There were workmen sitting at two trestle tables and we sat at the third with Pox at the head and Fonteyn at the foot. She looked odd among all the oilcloth and the holy pictures and she had a sort of frozen smile on, which was, I think, because the Neapolitan had been talking too much. During the minestrone and the spaghetti he told us everything he sold in his shop (and if he did them for ladies as well as gentlemen he told us twice), all about his children (twelve living and twelve dead), and quite a lot about his grandchildren (74 living), and how much he had paid for his new shop-window, his son's funeral and his car. The steak, the vegetables, the fruit, the cheese and the coffee still lay ahead, but I don't remember much else.

By 9.0 our smiling muscles were so tired that we decided to go straight to bed even though by Alghero standards it wasn't time for the cinemas to open.

Sunday, February 9th. Still raining when we woke and the Sirocco was making a noise like the wind only makes in radio plays in England.

After breakfast Fonteyn called us into her bedroom (it smelled deliciously of "Indiscretion") for a conference. Pox was lying on a chaise-longue with a

striped shawl on his head and Dolores on his feet. When we had all assembled he said that amusements in or near the water were out of the question, we had one more day left after this and had we any suggestions as to what tourists might do with themselves in Sardinia. There was a silence while Fonteyn giggled and then Ghost said in a very embarrassed voice "Well, I have recommended going up mountains on horseback in my article—only for people who don't mind bandits of course."

Well, Pox simply leapt at the idea. He rose from the chaise-longue (throwing Dolores) and cried "Miss Bone on a horse on top of a mountain! What more has life to offer? We'll do the beach stuff here and now, and catch the bus for the mountains after lunch." In half an hour we'd transformed Fonteyn's bedroom into the lido with three buckets of sand (Pox bribed the boots), a battery of lights on top of the wardrobe, Salvatore (specially fetched) mending nets in a corner (actually he's nicer to be near out of doors), and the shadows of me and Dolores in knee-length swimsuits sprawling across it all.

And an hour later we were sitting at a café eating salami and drinking Moscato de Tempio waiting for the bus to Nuoro.

Next week:

An adventure in the mountains



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